

JEEVADHARA

FEB 16 1985

A JOURNAL OF CHRISTIAN INTERPRETATION



THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN INDIA TODAY

AN INDIAN SEMINARY CURRICULUM: WHY AND WHAT FOR?

John B. Chethimattam

SEMINARY TRAINING IN INDIA TODAY: A CRITIQUE

Thomas Manickam

RETHINKING THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN INDIA:

NEW MODELS AND ALTERNATIVES

A DISCUSSION WITH SEBASTIAN KAPPEN

Kuncheria Pathil

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN HINDUISM, ANCIENT AND MODERN

Augustine Thottakara

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND CENSORSHIP IN THE CHURCH

Abraham Koothottil

JULY 1984

CONTENTS

	Page
Editorial	
An Indian Seminary Curriculum: Why and What for? <i>John B. Chethimattam</i>	255
Seminary Training in India Today: a Critique <i>Thomas Manickam</i>	270
Rethinking Theological Education in India: New Models and Alternatives A Discussion with Sebastian Kappen <i>Kuncheria Pathil</i>	283
Religious Education in Hinduism Ancient and Modern <i>Augustine Thottakara</i>	299
Freedom of Expression and Censorship in the Church <i>Abraham Koothottil</i>	319

Editorial

Theological education in the Church in India today seems to be completely western in method, orientation, content and programmes. The traditional seminary system, training and curriculum originated and developed in the post-Tridentine period, needs radical revision today in the light of the specific problems, needs and context of India. A critical examination and evaluation of the present system of theological education must be the starting point, and it must be done from three different perspectives: How far have we succeeded in incorporating the cultural, philosophical and spiritual heritage of India? What has been our reaction to the socio-economic and political situation of India which is characterized by abject poverty, social inequality and political corruption? Have we taken seriously the challenges of the contemporary scientific and secular world? Theological education in India today has to face squarely these three questions.

Articles and discussions in this number of *Jeevadhara* are mostly personal reflections of people who are really involved in and committed to the theological, priestly and religious formation of students in India. The contributors seem to agree on several important points: A priest or a Christian minister is not a "poojari" who is in charge of certain religious cults and rituals, but a minister of Christ, who is entrusted with the prophetic and liberating Word of God which is the Good News of salvation and liberation for the entire humanity. And his mission includes healing the sick and the afflicted, liberating the oppressed and the captives and feeding the hungry. This requires that the theological education and formation of our seminarians must be given in the context of actual life, in an encounter with the world outside, with the actual problems, questions and challenges of today. A mere academic formation of a speculative type in abstract categories of revelation and dogma given within the four walls and closed doors of the seminaries will turn our seminaries and theological colleges into "theological cemeteries". Although Christian

faith is transnational and transcultural, it is expressed and experienced only in the framework of particular histories, cultures, languages, philosophies and thought patterns. Hence there cannot be any single universal Christian culture or any single "perennial" Christian philosophy valid for all times, all places and all peoples. It points to the need of diversity in theology, in its methods and approaches, and consequently, diversity in the seminary curriculum and training. No ready-made models or alternatives are offered here, but some new directions are hinted and certain concrete changes are proposed. Vatican II stood for diversity as well as for freedom of research and expression. Abraham Koothottil says in his article on Censorship that the teaching of the Council 'made the institution of censorship meaningless and its continuation unjustified'; ironically the new code of canon law reaffirms it.

The articles on "Religious Education in Hinduism, Ancient and Modern" attempts to open up the world of classical educational system in Hinduism and the transformations it underwent through the centuries. This system as such is not proposed as a model. But its spirit of sacredness of all education, the rigour, discipline and hardwork it demands, and the personal way of communicating knowledge through an intimate relationship between the guru and the students are some of the valuable elements which could be assimilated into our system.

When we decided to grapple with this question of "Theological Education in India Today" in this number of *Jeevadhara*, we had in mind also the forthcoming Annual Meeting of the Indian Theological Association which is to discuss the same topic. We thought it might be a service to initiate such a discussion in advance to be an immediate preparation for the ITA meeting. We shall be happy if we can create an awareness that there are serious problems involved in the field of theological education in India and if we can also contribute in some small way to the discussions with regard to reform and revision in the seminary system, training and curriculum in our country.

Kuncheria Pathil

An Indian Seminary Curriculum: Why and What for?

The Problem

Ever since the Council of Trent established the norms for seminaries some four hundred years ago, there is a cold uniformity that characterises seminary curricula and programmes of training in clerical seminaries all over the world. This static and traditionalistic character of seminary education has been highlighted by the new and dynamic courses in theology introduced in recent decades in secular universities. Over against the daring and adventurous investigation of university scholars inspired by the principles of a scientific search for truth and truth alone uninhibited by ecclesiastical censorship and control, the preoccupation of traditional theological seminaries with old controversies, conciliar condemnations, heresies and dogmatic formulations apparently oblivious of the actual concerns and problems of the modern man has earned for these seminaries the nickname of "theological cemeteries". One important difference between the academic training imparted in the theological faculties of secular universities and the instruction given to candidates for the sacred ministry in seminaries is in the very conception of the scope of theological formation. Universities have placed the emphasis on imparting to students scientific skills to study the data of divine Revelation and to see by themselves their actual meaning and implications for the people of the modern age. Theological seminaries have, on the other hand, an abiding suspicion of independent research, and have, therefore, attempted to give to the future priests complete information on the divine truths, the content of Revelation as handed down in the tradition of the Church in all its varied aspects, Scriptural, patristic, dogmatic, moral,

pastoral, spiritual and liturgical, including even detailed sermon notes for their future preaching! This conception of divine Revelation in terms of truth propositions, initiated and perpetuated by the schoolmen of the Middle Ages, places a premium on uniformity: Since the truth of Christian faith is the same for all ages and for all peoples irrespective of clime and culture such content-oriented instruction has followed very much the style of ancient creeds, and tends to impose by its very nature a certain uniformity over seminary curricula all over the world.

The Vatican decree on priestly formation *Optatum totius* tried in principle to break this monotony by drawing attention to the great diversity of the priestly ministry exercised by the Church in the modern world:

Since the variety of peoples and places is so great, only general rules can be legislated. Hence in each nation or particular rite a "Program of Priestly Formation" should be undertaken...By it, universal laws are to be adapted to the special circumstances of time and place, so that priestly formation will always answer the pastoral needs of the area in which the ministry is to be exercised.

But coming to the details of the sacred studies what the council has done is simply to glorify the order of the old seminary curricula, proposing only very minor adaptations especially in the light of the revised ecclesiology of the West. It does not even recognize that the "new" image of the Church that inspired all the documents of Vatican II is to a great extent a product of Western culture and does not adequately respond to the faith as experienced and expressed down the centuries in the East. Moreover, the Roman Congregation for seminaries and universities which always maintained a tight control over theological faculties all over the world, has only hampered even the weak initiative taken by the Council to diversify seminary curricula.

Even in our own country when there is talk of "Indian" curricula of studies, absolute uniformity is con-

sidered a must by most people in responsible positions. They are not willing to accept the actual diversity, especially of the different Rites, that exists in our country. For example Rev. T.K. John S.J. states in a paper presented at the annual meeting of the Indian Theological Association held at Nagpur, October 21-24, 1983: "Now the Church is bedevilled by controversy. She has money, scholarship and time to spend on very ancient issues brought to our country and given to our culture. But to build up a liturgy based on our culture we have no will." He was referring to the insistence of the Syro-Malabar Church on its East Syrian tradition and its right to care for its members even outside its assigned territories. Many theologians in India are of opinion that it is high time we ignored completely our past foreign liturgical traditions both Latin as well as Syrian and concentrated on creating a genuine Indian theology.

Others, on the other hand, emphasize the historical character of divine revelation and the impossibility of separating faith from the living tradition of the Church. Faith comes to us not as an abstract doctrine, nor as cold facts, but as a continuous historical tradition. One cannot discard Rite, tradition and history like orange peels from the substance of faith. Even though faith is transcultural and transhistorical, only in and through particular cultures and particular histories is it available to us. Those who pretend to detach the substance of faith from the trappings of culture, tradition and history are in the danger of throwing the baby into the sink along with the dirty water. The tragedy of the Church in India today as a whole is that for the last three quarters of a century and more, though theological scholarship has greatly improved, there was no real liturgical formation of our people, even of the clergy. There is sharp division and even opposition between the liturgical celebrations, the theological ideas mostly borrowed from the West, and the practical conclusions for life drawn from the modern human sciences like psychology and sociology which again follow a Western pattern of thinking. Hence the spiritual sterility

of our apostolate. After the morning celebration of the Liturgy priests and missionaries are mostly social workers and psychologists, though much below the professionals in competence and proficiency. The only way to remedy this situation is to restore the integrity and harmony in seminary training by creating a unified perspective among liturgy, theology and other sacred sciences.

The Essentials of a Theological Curriculum

Even though theology may be a subject taught in a university it has a characteristic that distinguishes it from other academic subjects. It is rational interpretation of faith which receives its basic data from divine revelation. This divine revelation is handed down in the living tradition of a Church. Hence theology is a function of the Christian Church, systematically interpreting the contents of Christian faith. Though any one whether believer or unbeliever, can judge the reasonability of theological interpretations and the accuracy of its systematic procedure, its starting point and basic datum is the experience of the divine revelation handed down by the Church. So Christian theology is the work of those who affirm that Jesus is the Christ. Though it starts with the testimony of the Church, it is not a purely empirical science like history, psychology and sociology. It shares with philosophy a special feature in this that both the theologian and the philosopher are motivated by an immediate experience of something of ultimate value, something which challenges our very existence.

The sources of theological information are Sacred Scripture, Church history and the history of religion and culture. Bible is the original document about the events, especially what is known as the Christ Event, on which the Church itself is founded. It contains the original witness of those who participated in the revealing events. But to understand the religious meaning of those events one requires at least some preparation in human religion and culture. Against the background of the history of religions and the salvation history of the whole mankind the mystery of

salvation realized in Christ gains specific meaning. Similarly that mystery is effectively communicated to us through the experience of the Church in history as well as the Church's participation in that mystery.

Place and role of individual cultures and traditions in the understanding and communication of the divine mystery arise precisely from this experiential understanding of the same. All finite expressions of man's experience of God have finally to be denied lest they should become idolatrous distortions. The several gospels and Biblical narratives form only one Gospel. The individuality of the apostles whether Peter or Paul do not add to the reality of the mystery that was revealed in Jesus Christ. All announce the one definitive salvific event of human history, the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It forms the sum and substance of the message of the Apostles who participated in the event. Against the ineffability of the divine mystery effectively disclosed in the Christ Event both the individual and collective expressions of the experience of that event appear as inadequate approximations to the incomprehensible mystery.

Diversity of Approaches

But if in the Bible itself there is a certain variety of approaches to the mystery of our salvation in Christ, there is a greater diversity in the Church's ongoing reflection on faith, and different patterns of theology and worship developed under differing historical circumstances and the influence of opposing philosophical schools. The task of a theological curriculum is not merely to tabulate the items of faith and various strands of interpretation. Though faith is transnational and transcultural in content, scope and orientation, it is experienced and expressed only within the framework of a particular culture. Hence the scope of a curriculum within the context of a particular or individual Church is to design and describe the different areas in which the basic faith is to be realized, explained and communicated in and through the particular

culture and its tradition. In the sub-apostolic age the different cultures in which Christianity was preached shaped different patterns of theology.

Those who wanted to universalize the Gospel, following the example of St. Paul and St. John taking Christianity outside the Palestinian context, and to make it acceptable even to the Greek intellectuals, tried to express Christian faith through Greek philosophical categories. Christian apologists easily adopted Plato's conception of human salvation as an escape from this material world, the world of sense experience. Plato's basic idea was that man was man not by his physical body, biological nature and animal tendencies, but through his spiritual, immortal soul by which he is capable of grasping numbers and pure ideas and principles. But the present human condition is a bondage of the spirit to matter, which makes difficult a proper realization of spiritual values. A direct contemplation of spiritual realities is possible for the human soul only after separation from the body. The best course of action for man while in the body is to live as if he were without a body, and to rise from the knowledge of the material things through the intermediary ideas to the realization of the Form of all forms, the absolute and perfect Good. So Plato's basic principle is that man's world is not merely one of rocks and trees, but primarily a moral world, a world of participated good leading to a direct spiritual grasping or contemplation of Good as such. Christians could easily see Christ as the true Logos, the intermediary idea, storehouse of all forms, the one Mediator, the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation, the real Demiurge who created all things (Col. 1: 13-16). St. Paul's line of reasoning against the Greek henotheistic conception was that to be a true mediator between God and men Jesus Christ had to be truly God and truly man. This basic requirement of salvation will be met only in the light of the Christian revelation about the mystery of God that there are three distinct persons in the absolute unity of the divinity, and the mystery of the Incarnation according to which the one

who is truly the Son of God assumed in his person a true human nature as Jesus of Nazareth. So in this perspective the focus of Christian faith is the divinity of Christ, his true and complete humanity and the one divine Person who is at home in the two natures

There were other lines of thinking that developed in the context of special schools of philosophy. The Alexandrians greatly influenced by Middle Platonism and Gnostic traditions followed an allegorical and mystical approach to salvation conceiving it as a superior wisdom. Their tendency was to downplay the importance of the concrete and passible human nature of Christ and think of Christ as an ideal spiritual man. In its later phase it explained Christ's sufferings very much like a mystic's dark night of the soul. Salvation was the natural perfection of human nature attaining pure wisdom through self-purification. The immense volume of Gnostic Christian writings represented by the Naghamadi library shows the great popularity this line of thinking gained among Christians.

At the opposite extreme is the Roman pragmatic approach to faith. Its main concern was to make a catalogue as exhaustive as possible of the items and propositions of faith, clearly define them and neatly arrange them in systems and treatises in such a way as to be easily understood and faithfully followed by the common people. Most of the creeds of the early Church were formulated with this pragmatic scope. In fact the present seminary curricula are conceived and formulated with this passion for clarity and definiteness as guiding norms for the effective communication of faith: God's unity and trinity, man's creation, elevation and fall, Christ's incarnation, the work of redemption and the gift of grace, the foundation of the Church, her nature and distinctive notes and her Sacraments and finally the end of man form a neat logical division of the incomprehensible mystery of faith. Similarly the clear separation of the same object of faith into Scripture, dogma, morals, pastoral, and spiritual theologies, homiletics and the like categories

is an artificial but at the same time practically useful method of approach. But in this pragmatic and analytical approach to the mystery of faith, direct experience of divine revelation and a positive involvement in the mystery of human salvation are often lost. Hence a curriculum of theological studies arranged in this method of approach tends to be a purely theoretical discussion of the "truths" of revelation from which practical conclusions are drawn by way of deduction.

In contrast to this theoretical and speculative approach to faith is the Antiochean line of thinking which followed the traditional Hebrew approach that viewed salvation as a work of Yahweh, a concrete experience of the fulfilment of Yahweh's promise made to Israel. Our redemption in Christ is the climax of a series of great deeds performed by Yahweh for the sake of his chosen people: "In the past God spoke to our ancestors many times and many ways through the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us through His Son." (Heb. 1, 1-2) In this perspective the focus of faith is not the person and divinity of Christ, the one mediator, but what God did in Christ, raising him from the dead, making him Son and Saviour, and definitively liberating humanity from sin. Arius who was a disciple of Lucian in the Antiochean school was a typical example of this concrete way of thinking. The genuine insight he carried with him from Antioch to Alexandria touched the very heart of Christian faith: the only way to experience Christ the Logos was as man Jesus: There is no Logos outside of or beside from or additional to that concrete personality we encounter in the Jesus of the Gospels. Jesus is Logos. We cannot put a plus between Logos and Jesus. One has to encounter the two as one in a direct concrete experience. But when Arius jumped from this concrete experience to logical thinking he fell a victim to the theoretical dilemma how Jesus could be Logos and mediator at the same time: The Logos could only be either creator or created, God or creature. But the Logos has a beginning. So he could not be the beginningless Creator, but only a creature,

argued Arius. But this conclusion went against the basic supposition of the Greek understanding of salvation: Only a mediator, who is truly God can bring us salvation which is a real participation in the divine God. If our Saviour is not truly God we are not really saved. So the Arian conclusion was obviously wrong and so heretical. Arius was condemned, excommunicated and sent into exile. The Antiochian school as such did not fall into that heresy. But it retained this method of concrete experience of the mystery in life and action. The school of Antioch slowly became influenced by Byzantine thought, and the East Syrian schools of Edessa and Nisibis became the heirs of the early Antiochian perspective. What naturally developed in the isolated church of the East Syrians was a distinctive pattern of theology, the realization of the divine mystery of salvation in the concrete existence of the local Church with its experience of sin and suffering and hope of final redemption given by the Risen Lord who is already present in the midst of his people and is yet to come at the end of times as the rising sun from the East. Faith is, indeed, universal and transcends all cultures. Yet, this universal Gospel which challenges all peoples is available to this particular people only in its concrete experience bound up in the forms of its particular culture, never above or outside it. Faith can never be imported or imposed from the outside or discovered as an inner substance peeling off its outer skin of culture. It is in and through the experience of sin, suffering, struggle and success of this people that the mystery of the crucified and risen Lord is attained.

In this perspective theological education starts from the heart of the Eucharistic celebration of the believing community, the indwelling of the Lord in the midst of his people. The temple that houses the Deity, the Christian people with the risen Lord dwelling in their midst, and Jesus himself enshrining the divine Logos, all present a concrete experience of salvation. Temple and deity are seen as one. Our assimilation to the death of Christ in baptism is inseparably connected to our resurrection with

him. Placing the host on the paten in the image of Christ's death is concretely linked to the activity of the Holy Spirit raising Christ back to life. Similarly the vision of Christ as man and as Logos is a single experience. Starting from this unitary vision of the mystery of salvation scholars like Theodore of Mopsuestia, Narsai and St. Ephrem went on to consider the different mysteries as expressions and realizations of the same fundamental mystery. The method of approach was not one of analysis of the concepts and deduction of evident conclusions as with the Greeks and Romans, but rather one of action and reflection, experience and realization.

Eastern West and Western East

This radical divergence of methods between East and West is not a matter of geography, but rather that of styles of thinking. The great Fathers of the West like St. Augustine and St. Irenaeus were very much imbued with Eastern thought and approached the mystery of salvation in an integral manner. The so called Augustinian school of thought was not the creation of Augustine but something created by his later disciples who appealed to his authority to justify their own artificial systems of logic. Most of the liturgical renewal achieved in the West in recent decades owes its dynamic elements mostly to the writings of Eastern Fathers. Vatican Council II made a great effort to regain the Eastern dimension of theology which was the common patrimony of both East and West, though it was very much hampered in this by habits of thinking hardened through centuries.

On the other hand, the East Syrian Church in an effort to separate itself as completely as possible from the Byzantine Church made a concerted effort from the 6th century under the leadership of people like Babai, Timotheus and Yahballaha to philosophize faith with the aid of Aristotelian philosophy. As a result the main points of belief of the post sixth century Chaldean church are very close to the pre-Vatican II Latin positions. After the

sixth century the Chaldean positions became hardened so much that, as Jaroslav Pelican remarks, "it is possible to quote writers separated by many centuries, between Babai the great early in the seventh and Abdisa late in the thirteenth, almost without attention to their place in time".

Thus both in the post-sixth century Chaldean Church and in the pre-Vatican II Latin Church there is an exaggerated emphasis on the ecclesiastical authority for making liturgy what it is. For the pre-Vatican II Latin juridical approach liturgy as "public worship" could be the act only of the visible and organized Church, while Vatican II paid greater attention to the action of Christ continuing the work of redemption as the content and meaning of the liturgy. The Chaldean problem was deeper and more philosophical. For Babai following Aristotelian philosophy (as for Ratramnus in the West in the 9th century), Christ's risen body now in heaven could not be really on the thousands of altars today in the world, because a body can be present in place only through the accidents. Hence what is in the liturgy would solely be what the Church celebrates, of course, under the command and authority of Christ. According to the early East Syrians, on the other hand, the Church lends only hands and tongue to Christ who is immediately active in the liturgy: "Peter baptizes, Christ baptizes". The Eucharistic assembly is not arbitrarily created by any ecclesiastical authority. It is Christ himself who calls together the Eucharistic community through the sacrament of Baptism.

Latin conception of the Church as a visible institution easily discernible to everyone as the only true Church through the notes of unity, sanctity, apostolicity and catholicity has its counter part in the post-sixth century Chaldean ecclesiology. The Chaldeans considered their church the one true church since through the condemnation of Nestorius other churches were supposed to have fallen into apostacy. Far different was the ecclesiology of the early East Syrian Church which thought of the ecclesial community as paradise on earth, the communion of all who are led by Christ the one Saviour.

The most disastrous impact of post-sixth century Chaldean thought is in the field of spirituality. According to Babai and others the Incarnation is for the revelation of the Trinitarian mystery, and salvation is what God (the Spirit) does in our souls. Just as the Spirit perfected Jesus Christ through suffering and death and glorified him through the resurrection as the first among human beings and our model, the same Spirit acts in us to sanctify us. In this view our sanctification has no direct relation to the divine person of Jesus Christ. This is very much the spirituality of the Old Testament except that the work of sanctification is attributed to the Holy Spirit just as revelation is attributed to the Word. Ironically it is very close to the pre-Vatican II Latin spirituality: In the standard manuals of spirituality like that of Rodriguez and Tanqueray it is difficult to find a central role in our spiritual life assigned to Jesus Christ. But in the early East Syrian tradition the perspective is entirely different. Our Christian life is not any kind of Gnostic divinisation, nor something which though "merited" by Christ remains fundamentally independent of Him and can be produced by God's will. It is our concrete incorporation in Christ and participation in his life. Christ is not only the foundation stone of our life of faith but the corner stone, keystone and cap stone.

Early East Syrian Tradition and Indian Thought

The early East Syrian tradition represented by the Anaphora of Addai and Mari and the writings of St. Ephrem, Aphraates and others have a close affinity to the Indian Hindu and Buddhist traditions in their approach to the mystery of faith. They launch the inquiry into the truth of faith as an ongoing reflection on action. Hinduism started with sacrifice and Vedanta, the end and goal of the Vedas or theology, developed as a spiritualization of the physical sacrifice. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad begins its meditation on the cosmos by imagining the sacrificial horse itself as the universe. Buddha's long meditation under the Bodhi tree and final illumination came as the sequel to his renunciation of the world and a long search for truth. The

intense desire to know God arises as a result of one's effort to get rid of one's sins, to weaken the passions and to attain tranquillity and peace. Even this effort at attaining salvation is an experience, since one encounters the divine Reality not as an abstraction but either as one intimately involved in our salvation, or as the factual denial of all that we consider important in this life. Prajapati who sacrifices himself in creating the universe, Christ the creative Word accepting death on the Cross for the salvation of all and the Buddhist conception of Nirvana, the blowing out of the flame as the only authentic conception of the really real all imply an existential encounter with the Saviour. A God who is not encountered as the liberative meaning of human existence is simply an abstraction, a God solely of the philosophers. Only in and through the experience of God involved in the economy of our salvation can one arrive at the immanent nature of the Deity. We can only point to the real nature of the God in the Vedantic formula of "janmādyasayatah" that from which the origin etc. of things. That means the real nature of God is perceived only through silence.

How do we deal with Sacred Scripture?

Modern Western Biblical criticism has almost emptied the Sacred Scripture of all meaning. By analysing the Word of God into different literary forms, various sources, chosen freely by the redactors to prove their own particular type of theology, especially by showing that we do not know anything definite about the actual people who wrote the Bible, modern scholarship has actually reduced them to human books. In these different areas of criticism we are not any closer to a clear and definite solution than we were a quarter of a century ago! In this scholarly Western approach to the study of Sacred Scripture, the different books of the Bible have become sources of humanly interesting information, very valuable for preachers and teachers who want to entertain their audience and capture their interest and attention. What is almost completely missed is their unique character as the Word

of God in the words of man, their saving character. In this aspect the approach of the East Syrian Fathers and Indian thinkers to Sacred Scripture is of great value in designing a theological curriculum. Syrian Fathers like St. Ephrem had their own unique Biblical hermeneutics. They did not go for an allegorical or symbolical meaning, nor analyse the texts to minute pieces of human information. For them Scripture is an encounter with Christ who speaks through it, through its various characters and communicates to us its salvific message. That salvific message is its primary meaning, and the human characters and events are only human words through which the Word of God is communicated to us, and these should be ascribed only a secondary importance as tools of divine self-communication. Similarly the Hindu commentators on Sacred Scripture like Sabara, Sankara and Ramanuja place the primary importance on the "mukhyartha" or principal meaning of Scripture which is to reveal Brahman, the one without a second, the meaning of all meanings. The different stories, philosophical theories, imagery are to be taken only as means for conveying this primary meaning. From this primary experience of the "Nadabrahman", God the Word, everything else flows as natural consequences.

Conclusion

A seminary curriculum conceived in the Oriental and Indian context has to place the emphasis first on experience of faith in dedicated activity in life, and theology must be the ongoing reflection on that action. A mere shopping list of items of faith and treatises for discussion can lead only to empty speculation. This does not mean that theology has to be less intellectual. There are two movements of intellectuality as Plato himself admitted in the *Phaedo*. One moves from ideas to greater and greater abstraction and generalization. The other, on the other hand, starting with and supposing the experience of the transcendent comes down to see its expression in the various areas of human life. One can go to the sea shore, miss the view of the vast ocean and concentrate attention on

the individual drops of water in great mass. Another may be looking at a drop of dew on a blade of grass and experience in it the vast ocean. The task of a theological curriculum is to enable the student gain a concrete and direct vision of the Transcendent in every detail of man's salvific encounter with God. Here the method of approach is of more crucial importance than the sundry details of the content of the courses.

John B. Chethimattam

C. M. I. Provincial House
Post Box No. 401
Trivandrum 695 014

Seminary Training in India Today: a Critique

By "Seminary Training in India Today" I mean here the task-oriented, relevant and integral formation of personnel for the effective communication of the Word of God. While living it personally and acting according to the radical demands of the same for the development and well-being of the entire people of God, especially the people of this country which is an integral part of the human race redeemed by Jesus Christ. The understanding of the concept of the "people of God" implied here is in its widest denotation possible and is in consonance with the beautiful theological description of the same given in *Lumen Gentium* by the Second Vatican Council, which reads:

...All the faithful, scattered though they be throughout the world, are in communion with each other in the Holy Spirit, and so 'he who dwells in Rome knows that the people of India are his members' (cf. John Chrysostom, *In Jo. Hom*, 65, 1)... All men are called to be part of this catholic unity of the people of God which in promoting universal peace presages it. And there belong to or are related to it in various ways the catholic faithful, all who believe in Christ, and, indeed, *the whole of mankind*, for all humans are called by the grace of God to salvation (art. 13).

It is in this broader perspective that we will have to understand the deeper implications of calling the people of India as a whole as part of the "people of God", the humanity at large which was the main concern of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Only in such a broader perspective we Christians in India have any significant

role to play in the over all transformative function of the ministers of the Word of God, as well as servants of the suffering and exploited humans of our country. In our country, where a great heritage and treasure of authentic, practical and relevant spiritual and religious values are lived, high ideals of morals and philosophical and theological visions contemplated and experienced, our nominal tokens of spiritual displays, external practices, superficial rituals, western social formalities, tips of charities, agency-work as deputies of western organizations, "food for work" techniques, managerial diplomacies, unrealistic and triumphalistic ecclesiastical dominating tendencies and strategies, conflicts of Rites, superiority claims of various nomenclatures, and many other really unchristian attitudes are not going to serve any real evangelical purpose. In this juncture whom are we training in our traditional seminaries? And for what purpose?

Our Indian Context

The Indian context of seminary formation *de facto* has a number of challenges to face in order to make the formation system itself relevant. On the one hand, it is a terribly pluralistic context in all phases of human enterprise, cultural, anthropological, economic, linguistic, educational, political, social and religious. On the other hand, there is an underlying sense of oneness felt lurkingly, sometimes superficially, sometimes in depth of the national identity, especially, at the time of foreign threat of jeopardizing the national identity. On another level of human life and struggle for survival there is the tendency to perpetuate poverty, exploitation, oppression, violence, communal struggles, terrorism, corruption, desecration of the most sacred sanctuaries of holiness, forgery in universities and bribery even in hospitals, wherein the true meaning of humanity, divinity, dignity and decency are all smashed and trampled under barbaric invasions of devilish or inhuman forces. And the "people of God" is suffering from all these evils, bondage, ignorance, blindness and slavery. Just as the people of the Old

Testament times waited for a Messiah who can liberate and uplift, cleanse "the den of thieves", purify the holy sanctuaries, bring about peace and order, heal the wounded, cure the sick, console the weeping, strengthen the weak, and "send the mighty one empty away", the people of our times, here in India, are also waiting for new messiahs who can complete the prophetic and messianic role of Jesus Christ who boldly declared as fulfilled in himself the messianic prophesy of prophet Isaiah:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind; to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people (Luke 4: 18-19).

Should the disciples of such a radically action-oriented Messiah keep idle doing only the ritualistic functions of a "*Pujari*" or cultic priest interested only in the minutiae of the brahmanical celebrations of the temples? If that is all what a priest of the disciples of Jesus Christ is expected to do, it is enough to know, to read the texts of the "sacraments" and know the "ordo" (rubrics of rituals) of performances or celebrations. He need not spend his energy, time, talents and skills to explore the meaning of the prophesies, he need not spare his life time for such a long period of training, extended more or less upto 15 years after one's metriculation or S.S.L.C. But if he is expected to follow the footsteps of the Prophetic Master, Jesus, who came primarily for the liberation of the poor and oppressed, sick and afflicted, the sinners and the wretched, the destitutes and the prostitutes, the "Samaritans and the Syro-Phoenicians", "those of the household" and of the "gentiles" alike, then he has to be trained for this kind of prophetic mission and task. Jesus was not, and could not be, a priest of the levitical order when he was alive (cf. Heb. 8:4), but was the Messiah, the Prophet, the Liberator of mankind from all sorts of sins and oppressions. It is his resurrection and

ascension that made the whole difference on him, to be also the "high priest" before the "throne of the Majesty of God" (cf. Heb. 8:1-6), to be superior to all other priests who are only a copy and a shadow of what is in heaven (cf. Heb. 8:5). So in the real world of ours, where the people are suffering from poverty, sin and exploitation, injustice and dishonour, the prophetic function of the Messiah, the liberative programme of action, should be given priority to the ritualistic, self-complacent, symbolic celebrations of the eschatological mysteries, which are nonetheless mysteries to be awaited, ideals to be actualized here and now partly also in this vale of tears while we are on our tiring pilgrimage to the shrine beyond this shore. Should the disciples of the Master be trained and prepared to pass through the passover of the suffering of the Master so that they may also enter into his glory, resurrection and ascension? If the answer is positive, then our seminary training of the old pattern of making priests for cultic celebrations should be geared to transform them into committed disciples of the prophetic actions of the Master.

Even in the case of the pastoral orientation should a disciple be trained to follow the boldness of the true Shepherd who is willing to face the wolf which comes to attack the fold of sheep, and not himself escaping from the attack of the wolf like a hireling? This is a good symbol to understand the true nature of a responsible pastor who is even ready to suffer, face the odd realities of the people, fight their cause of justice, stand for their human rights, and even suffer hunger and thirst for righteousness' sake, and in that very process of the painful passover be ready to die, sacrifice his life for his sheep in the very model of "Good Shepherd". There is no dearth of official documents of the Official Church to this effect. The Synod of Bishops of 1971, held in Rome, in its official declaration on *The Ministerial Priesthood*, has the following statement:

Together with the entire Church, priests are obliged, to the utmost of their ability, to select a definite pattern of action, when it is a question of the defence of fundamental human rights, the promotion of the full development of persons and the pursuit of the cause of peace and justice; the means must, indeed, always be consonant with the Gospel.

Similarly in the declaration of the same Synod on 'Justice in the World' there is another corroboration of the above statement:

Action on behalf of justice, and participation in the transformation of the World, fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or in other words, the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation.

The consciousness of the Indian Church at least officially declared in the General Body Meeting of the CBCI held in Calcutta (January 6-14, 1974), which was also its communication to the Synod of Bishops held in Rome the same year, is also pertinent here:-

Like Christ, the Church must exercise her prophetic role and adopt a constructively critical approach towards the pattern and trends of traditional and modern Indian society, and the forces that are shaping it.

These and many other official and non-official statements of the Universal Church and some individual Churches especially of the developing countries sufficiently and powerfully express in depth the need of awakening our consciousness about the urgency of emphasizing the prophetic role of the Master much more today, than ever before and give such a training to the younger generation of priests who would in their turn take up the master's liberative role of action for the people's integral liberation.

The present day Seminary Training

It is an alarming fact that even today, twenty years after the call of the Second Vatican Council for renewal of Church-life in all its phases, much has not been done especially in India in the matter of updating the seminary formation. What was proposed by the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century as the programme of priestly training is still followed more or less in the same pattern and style. Two or three years of philosophy and four years of theology with mostly the scholastic thought pattern had been almost perpetuated in the Indian seminaries also. Attempts are being made in some Faculties of Philosophy and Theology in India to integrate secular studies such as courses in Arts and Sciences incorporated with Philosophy course and that mostly according to the examination oriented system of the secular colleges. The entire system both in the colleges and in the seminaries was long so modelled in the western colonial pattern as regards both the curriculum and the teaching method. Most of the themes, topics and issues are not relevant even in the western academic centres both secular and ecclesiastical. Even then they are considered to be points of perennial philosophy in an ever changing,, relativizing world of pluralistic ideologies, cultures, nationalities. It seems that our Indian seminary trainers are more specific to pick up those scholastic points of the medieval European thinking as the only perennial points. They seem to make their own special selection of interested points of teaching from the Vatican Document on Priestly Formation, as for example, in the statement of philosophical training the following instruction is given:

Philosophy should be taught in such a way, that students will be led to acquire a solid and coherent understanding of man, of the world and of God. *Basing themselves on a philosophic heritage which is perennially valid*, students should also be conversant with contemporary philosophical investigations, especially, those exercising special influ-

ence on their own country, and with recent scientific progress (*Optatam Totius*, Art. 15).

From such a document of Vatican Council which actually stresses the need of contextualizing formation, arguments are drawn by a number of philosophy teachers who show greater predilection to the second clause of the instruction, even to defeat the purposes of the instruction itself. Because of this kind of favouritism to the medieval thinking the programme of systematic philosophy is still in the outdated pattern which consists of the six classical treatises: Epistemology, Metaphysics, Cosmology, Psychology, Ethics and Theodicy or Natural Theology. This package is wrapped in a hard cover of the history of Western philosophy which is further covered with a thin membrane of Indian Philosophy which is like a polythene that should protect the package from all weather conditions. If any casualty happens to the package in transit and handling by inexperienced hands, at the most only the polythene cover is spoiled and it can be easily dispensed with, keeping the scholastic material as the safe perennial stuff.

The fact that the stuff is already rotten and does not sell in the market of the common people of a different cultural milieu is only grasped by the priest who starts preaching his first homily to the ordinary people. The people do not understand the categories of thought of their new shepherd whose head is stuffed with medieval scholasticism or neo-scholasticism or German transcendentalism.

Theological studies and even Biblical studies have the same fate of philosophical studies. Too much of scholastic dogmatization in exposition results in pure conceptualization of the mystery. After the higher critical operation on the Word of God, a sceptical air is breathed; after all talk of demythologization, structural analysis, linguistic analysis and the elimination of the mystic content of the Word of God it appears to evaporate itself losing the thread of credibility at last.

In India there is a clear sign of revolt from many corners of the country and sections of people against ideological colonialism, and foreign dependence for the resources of Christian life and Mission here. This revolt is also reflected on cultural and militant revivalist movements already at work against Christianity and its western bias. Often these movements are taking political weapons too against the Christian movements and even on persons. Many well meaning people, academicians as well as religionists, are discovering the value of our own culture, heritage, wisdom and traditions. Many are even anxious to return to their own roots. They rather spontaneously react to the foreignness of our world-visions, divided loyalties, favouritism of English medium schools etc., all under the accusation that we christians are not sufficiently devoted to the nation and its policies. The priests are trained more to suit the bureaus of the city rectories. They are imitating the "secretary-cum-attendant" system of western bureaucratic pastorship, which is conditioned by the capitalistic socio-economic privatized style of life. In the cities amenities of life, communication media, transportation, recreation facilities, clubs, etc. are easily available. There is strong feeling often expressed by concerned Bishops that their clergy so far trained in the traditional seminaries which are mostly following the western life-style are only good for city parishes. The priests are very reluctant to go for service in the villages, inspite of the fact that the large section of the people of India live in villages. Some stumbling steps are now being taken on experimental basis by some bold Bishops and Religious Societies to ruralize seminary formation. But there is also strong resistance to this from interested corners. These would argue that it is only a matter of attitude that we should create among the seminarians in formation so much so that they would rather spontaneously opt for village life once they are out of the posch city based seminaries. It is still a hypothesis which may be further experimented to see the actuality. Contextualization, inculturation, integration, and involvement are essentially programmes of action, and not mere ideologies.

They need actual working forms and life-styles and not simple attitudes. These are action models derived from the basic pattern of the kenotic incarnational experience of Jesus.

Learning and teaching to be contextualized

The above observations lead us to reconsider our existing methods of learning and teaching. In this the ideal model is that of Jesus Christ, known as the "pedagogy of Jesus", the speciality of which is exposure to the realities of this world, life and problems, and learning directly from there with the help of the personal guidance of the Master. The Master directs the students to learn directly from the realities of the world and not from books. The whole universe was the school of teaching for Jesus and learning for the disciples. The underlying truth is that before man's creation of universities which contain only records and specimens of the world-events and realities, God himself had created the whole Universe as the big school of learning which is full of realities themselves and not notes about them. The world of people and their living issues and problems were the lessons Jesus exposed to his disciples to observe, learn and take lessons to improve the conditions of life. He, therefore, taught his "illiterate simpletons" in their language of concrete expressions, names, forms and events the mysteries of the "Kingdom of God", which consisted in maintaining "righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit", which are the greatest gifts of the Father in Heaven given freely to "men of good will". Living with the people, thinking along with them, speaking their language, feeling with them, trying to understand their problems, attempting to solve them by their own hard work, trusting in God's power always, and at the same time enjoying good fellowship with the team of disciples together with the Master, united in prayer, silence and austerity. These were the main ingredients of the formation strategy of Jesus' Christ, which is known as the "Pedagogy of Jesus".

India is a land of religiously disposed people with lots of human problems. At the same time it is also a land of great teachers, Rishis, Bodhisatvas, Acharyas, Gurus and Upadhyayas. There are so many models of learning, teaching and systematic work that we can learn from our own masters who have many things in common with Jesus himself who has followed a typical oriental style of a Guru and a Teacher in teaching and experiencing this world. The use of the language of symbols, parables, stories, and wisdom sayings are all concrete steps of real scientific and systematic learning which may well be observed critically as graded intellectual search for the values of life in this world and here after.

Task-oriented training to serve the people of India

The fundamental assumption of seminary formation in India must be that it is for India that our seminaries train priests" (cf. *Programme of Priestly Formation for India*, by Commissio Technica, CBCI, 1970, p. 31).

This implies some clear task orientation in our programme for training priests for the Indian people of God. Some of the task orientations are:

1. to be able to converse with the various religious groups of the "people of God", such as other Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and others;
2. to be capable of discovering the indelible seals of the Holy Spirit already marking and naming the children of the Heavenly Father in this part of the "Kingdom of God";
3. to be able to understand the truths and the "rays of true light that enlightens every one who comes into this world" (Jn 1:9), which are already at work among the various truth-seekers of this country.
4. to be broad-hearted enough to join the fellow pilgrims who in different ways and manners are heading to the great *Tirtha* (holy shrine) with their own appropriate

and pleasing *Sadhanas* (means of realization), and guiding them if they realize that we have something more to offer;

5. to be able to live with the common people and share their lives while steering them for achieving greater perfection in meaning and purpose of life as well as being sufficiently filled with the things of the Spirit to be ready to fill even the vacuum chambers of those who are concerned only with the things of Matter;
6. to be capable of understanding the mysteries of God's hidden presence and enveloping activities in the history, culture, philosophy, theology and mysticism of his people here in this country and interpreting their message and meaning towards a unique contribution to the spiritual wealth of humanity at large with a typically Christian flavour;
7. to be committed for the cause of the integral liberation of the people, both material and spiritual, social and economic, cultural and political, as well as for justice and peace, communal harmony, human solidarity and national integration.

Integral Formation and Discipline

For a task oriented formation an integral discipline with a holistic world view which is so congenial to the Indian culture and tradition has to be introduced in the seminary system. This may include the following elements so far as the educational process is concerned:

1. *Harmony with Nature and involvement in the concerns of the People*, especially the farmers and villagers; this is preferred because of the larger section of the Indian populace who are the backbone of the Nation; the majority of this larger section is still under deliberately perpetuated oppressive systems which are religious, social and cultural in function. A system of education which has constant reference to the understanding of the course of events in Nature, where

man has to work hard to win his bread in tune with the laws of the Universe and not according to the whims and fancies of the privileged potentates, might set the proper tools of conscientization for the students.

2. *Harmony with oneself and one's cultural heritage*, especially with the post-independent period of Indian history of nation-building. Only a self-respecting people and nation can achieve anything original and authentic that may last for the generations to come. So a policy of self-reliance in the matter of learning process, textbooks, aids, ideas and ideologies has to be synchronized with the tasks the future minister has to undertake. Western imitations in all the above said items will keep the minister and the ministry under the slavish dependence on the patterns of a one dimensional society, the consumer society which has already demonstrated its failure to sustain the spiritual concerns of mankind. Our seminary training programme should have sufficient, culturally autonomous and self-consistent ideologies of spiritual and intellectual formation which will corroborate the ideology of nation-building and national integration. The ministers of the Indian people of God cannot keep idle or neglect the temporal concerns of the Nation, because in Indian tradition, even in politics there is no clear demarcation of the sphere of the temporal and the spiritual, or of the secular and the sacred. Man is understood as a holistic being having both or even more realms properly synchronized with identical functions co-ordinated and harmonized for the common well-being of man. There seems no dichotomy between the realms of the spirit and that of the body. How better a minister would succeed in bridging the apparent gap between the realms of spirit and body would very much depend on the type of formation and training he gets or undergoes in the seminary.
3. *Harmony with others and dialogue with other religious people*. In the coming ages a minister of Christianity in

India can be an isolated servant of the people of God. The concept of the pilgrimage and that of the fellow-pilgrims have great significance in an actually pluralistic religious context. The authentically Christian dimension of religion and spirituality is foundationally allied with the authentically religious and spiritual dimensions of any particular religious community in India. Since this is being realized as a phenomenological experience in the consciousness of all well meaning religious and spiritual people in India what is feasible for effective Christian witnessing of love is human harmony with all men of good will for achieving together the fruits of the "Kingdom of God" here on earth, while working hand in hand with all the children of God for the benefit of the same. Our identity as Christian ministers would still be there in the matter of prophetic, challenging and heroic commitment to God and His people. Seminary training itself should be an open one which would welcome trials of this kind of collaboration with the candidates under training of other religions having similar purposes and orientations.

Thomas Manickam

Dharmaram College
Bangalore. 560 029

Rethinking Theological Education in India: New Models and Alternatives

A Discussion with Sebastian Kappen

Kuncheria Pathil (P): This Number of *Jeevadhara* proposes to deal with the theme of "Theological Education in India Today". We would like to review critically the present system, training and curriculum of our Seminaries and Theological Colleges and suggest certain principles and guidelines for a rethinking in this area. It may be too ambitious to hope proposing "new models and alternatives" in the area of theological education in India today. Still, it seems extremely important that we should at least start floating some new ideas and suggestions to promote and provoke rethinking and remodelling theological education in our country. You have been swimming across the current in the Church in India for quite a long time and you are well known for your unconventional and original thinking and life-style. I would like you to speak frankly of your personal views on theological education in India today and to make concrete suggestions for new models and alternatives.

In order to evaluate the system, training and curriculum of our Seminaries and Theological Colleges, perhaps, we have to start asking, "Whom are we forming?". What is our image and idea of a priest today? So let me begin with this question: What is your idea of a priest, his role and function in the Church and in the society at large today?

Sebastian Kappen (K): I think the role of the priest is to continue the mission of Jesus which consisted in preaching the Kingdom of God, the coming of a new humanity built on freedom, justice and love. In practice this meant for Jesus, setting the prisoners free, emancipating the oppres-

sed, exercising the demonic and dehumanizing forces in society. And this is the work we, priests, have to continue, especially in the Indian context. I don't think that cultic priesthood as understood today in Christian circles has any basis in the teaching of Jesus. It is only a product of certain historical conditions. As Christianity, or rather, the Jesus Movement, spread in the hellenistic world it became assimilated to certain cultic practices in that cultural milieu, particularly to the mystery cults. This process eventually accentuated and by the middle ages the cultic priesthood had fully developed in the Church.

P. It is quite true that the leaders of the early Christian communities were prophets or charismatic figures rather than "priests". The word "priest" was not used for the leaders of the early Church. They were called "presbyters" or elders, a secular office of the jewish community vis-à-vis the jewish priests. But then, how do you understand the Eucharistic gatherings of the early Christian communities?

K. The so-called Eucharist has to be understood not so much as a cultic function but as a prophetic gesture pointing to the Kingdom of God. It is an anticipation, symbolic and real, on the part of Jesus, of the Kingdom in his historical context. "Take this and share it among you because from now on, I tell you I shall not drink wine until the Kingdom of God comes." (Lk 22: 17-18) The focus is on the future, the Kingdom of God. Unfortunately this has been lost sight of. The Eucharist, a revolutionary prophetic gesture, has been reduced to a cultic function which is repeated everyday, every week, according to the rhythm of cyclic time. I think this is a deviation. And I think the original concept of the Eucharist and the priesthood is very much relevant in the Indian context. By going back to the original idea of Jesus, we are at the same time making the Eucharist and priesthood relevant in our context today where the vast majority of people are exploited and live in sub-human conditions.

P. Well, with this idea of priesthood in your mind, if you look at the big Seminaries and Theological Colleges in

India and the training and formation imparted there, what would be your reaction and comment? Are you happy with the present situation?

K. Regarding the formation given in most of our seminaries, I have one comment to make which may sound rather cynical. The first part of formation consists in creating a gulf between seminarians and the world, and the second part, in fact the rest of life, is an attempt to bridge that gulf. This is pathetic. The candidates are taken out of the real world and put in huge institutions where they are physically and mentally walled in, where they develop their own life-style, their own clerical culture, where their life is insured against all anxieties and sufferings, where they live in complete security. I said this is tragic because it is not within the space of the four walls that God speaks. God is in the real world, in streets, in market places, in homes, in the Assembly, in the Parliament, in schools, in colleges, in short, in the context of real life. It is there God speaks to us and challenges us; and we are not there: We carve out a section of the world, make it our private abode and there we live in a sort of sublime isolation. This has many negative consequences: Precisely because seminarians are not in the heart of the world where God speaks, they never really encounter God. And only when they come to an encounter with God, they will be committed people. What happens today is that seminaries are producing so many priests and sending them into the world but most of them are at heart uncommitted. To encounter God is like conceiving a bomb which has to explode into action that renews the face of the Earth. That sort of commitment you don't find in the priests who are coming out of the seminaries today. Another tragic consequence is lack of creativity. It looks as though seminary formation makes the candidates spiritually eunuchs, depriving them of authentic creativity. Whichever field we take, whether it be literature, art, philosophy or social sciences, our presence there is insignificant. We live in ghettos without any impact even in the town in which we live. One clear instance of this

lack of creativity is the absence of poets, writers and novelists among priests. It looks as though their aesthetic sense had atrophied during formation. When I speak about art and literature, I am not taking them as mere secular occupations, but as vehicles through which christian vision has to be communicated. Within huge seminaries, isolated from the real world, you learn a different language and a set of categories which cannot be understood by the people outside. As a result, you find yourself alienated from the community. A communication-gap arises between you and the people. These are some of the negative points of seminary formation today. We have hundreds of priests today with doctorates in philosophy, theology and so on; but their voice is not heard, they are not a force in the country.

P. You have outlined very well the pathetic situation of our seminary system and training. I want to point out that this is the situation not only in our country but in all parts of the Catholic world. The whole seminary system and its particular curriculum have their origins in the post-Tridentine period, and today the Church is demanding standardization of the seminaries and their curriculum. In other words, our seminary system and curriculum are controlled by Rome. In this situation is change possible? What would you suggest to change this situation?

K. The problem you have raised is very crucial. Of course, changing the present situation is not easy. Centralized control is the greatest obstacle. Here we come to an important ecclesiological issue. The Universal Church is monarchically structured. It has a monarchical centre; and this centre is in the West. It is this centre which dictates methods of formation to the periphery. The centre can do so because it financially supports seminaries at the periphery. Naturally, those who give money have control over the ideas of those who receive the money; it is easy to dictate to them. This, in my view is a sort of ecclesial, theological imperialism. The solution calls for a radical restructuring of the Church itself. A certain decentralization of Church structures is necessary for any change.

Our present seminary professors who were trained in the West are more or less continuing western systems and copying western ideas. We look to the West, as the centre of Orthodoxy, as the place where Christianity developed its genius to the maximum, and, therefore, as the place where you can learn what Christianity really is. Naturally, superiors send their subjects abroad; and these get trained and come back. So the training of the seminary staff is also related to the centralized structure of the Church. Another point I want to mention is that when you go abroad to study theology, you learn a theology which is universal dealing with general concepts which do not touch reality anywhere; and you come back armed with this universal concepts. Then you find there is a wide gulf between the universal concepts which you had picked up and the concrete realities you encounter in your own country. Thus we come back to the problem of that gulf of which I spoke earlier.

P. I fully agree with you that too much control from the Centre violates the principles of autonomy of Local Churches and theological pluralism and it hinders the process of indigenization and inculturation of the Local Churches. A change in the ecclesial structures is a must for a change in the seminary system and formation. But should we wait for the change in ecclesial structures to be initiated from above by the Church authorities, or could it be possible for us to effect changes from below?

K. It will be wonderful to have men at the top, men of vision, who would initiate change from above and introduce a new type of training and curriculum in our seminaries. But it may be too much to hope for. What is more important is that our younger theologians go through an anguishing process of rethinking, effect an epistemological rupture with traditional theology and start thinking from below, from life itself. Let me speak of my own experience: I finished my doctorate in Rome in 1961 and wrote my thesis on Karl Marx. If any philosophy helped me to go back to the New Testament, to rediscover Jesus,

and to call in question traditional theology, it was Marxism. Why? When you study Marxism you are confronting a philosophy that challenges all your presuppositions, and you are thrown back on yourself. You begin to critically evaluate the Church and her doctrines. You realize that these doctrines are culturally and historically conditioned, shaped by economic and political factors. You realize that the same is true of Aristotelian and Thomistic thinking, that they have no perennial value. Then the question arises: What is the perennial core of faith you have to hold on to as a disciple of Jesus? Thus you are forced to go back to the New Testament. Hence to effect an epistemological rupture with the present mode of thinking, an essential precondition is an encounter with a philosophy like Marxism which challenges and questions all your presuppositions. This alone is not enough. To continue with my own experience, in 1961 when I came back to Kerala, I was involved with the student Movement and was in charge of the Newman Association. But in spite of my doctorate and academic credentials, I could not answer the questions raised by students, teachers, professors and Marxists, I felt ashamed, I came back to my room, I perspired, I began to rethink their questions and gradually I found answers which would satisfy them. I went through this process for ten to fifteen years. And I have still not done with it. What I want to stress is that facing challenges from outside is absolutely necessary in any attempt to build up a new theology.

P. I am really fascinated by your personal experience, and let me for a moment deviate from my main theme and ask you one or two side questions. Your encounter with Marxist philosophy questioned all your presuppositions, all your dogmas, doctrines and theology as culturally and historically conditioned, and led you back to the New Testament, to the teachings of Jesus. But there again if you are consistent with your philosophy, you should question the ideas, doctrines and teachings of Jesus himself as they too are culturally and historically conditioned.

Even beyond that you have to question the very Marxist thinking and system which is also economically, politically, socially and culturally conditioned.

K. Definitely, Jesus' teachings too are culturally and historically conditioned. And here we need a new exegetical approach. In the New Testament we find different types of conditioning. On the one hand, we find that the life and teachings of Jesus, his vision and praxis, have a perennial value. His vision and social praxis have an abiding value though they need to be translated into different categories in different historical and cultural contexts. On the other hand, Jesus' teachings and praxis have certain limitations. Even his language has limitations. He was born and brought up in a patriarchal society: so he taught us to pray, "Our Father in Heaven". If he were born somewhere in the Kasi Hills in Assam, he would have told us to pray, "Our Mother on Earth". This is an instance of cultural conditioning. You have to accept this and not make Jesus an Absolute, but recognize him as a human being, as culturally conditioned. So you have to learn to distinguish what is perennial in the teachings and praxis of Jesus from what is the product of the times. Here, again, it is Marx who gives you the clue to a new approach to the New Testament. Till I learned Marxism, I read the New Testament from the point of view of the privileged classes to which I myself belonged. But Marx taught me to read the New Testament from the standpoint of Jesus. Jesus himself read the Old Testament from the standpoint of the poor and the oppressed. You have to put yourself in his place and read the New Testament from the point of view of the poor, the widow, and the orphan. And this opens entirely new perspectives.

There is also another, negative type of cultural conditioning, in the New Testament writings. Concerning State power, for instance, Jesus' position was radical. He questioned all power and envisaged a society where everybody is the servant of every body else. But when we come to Paul, we find him arguing that all authority is

from above and that you have to submit to your rulers (Rom. 13:1-7). He thus diluted the teaching of Jesus. Here we already find the beginning of a process of alienation. This is what I call the negative conditioning of the New Testament. Here again it was Marx who showed me the way. So much in answer to your question on the cultural and social conditioning of Jesus and the New Testament itself.

To your second query, whether I accept Marxism without questioning; I must say that when I admit that I have been deeply influenced by Marxism and that it was Marx who led me to Jesus and to the New Testament, I must also state that I have studied Marx critically and have fundamental disagreements with him on many points, particularly with regard to the materialistic conception of history. I am in fact attacked on both fronts. Christians call me Marxist. And Orthodox Marxists attack me for distorting Marx. Marxism has certainly given me certain fundamental perspectives. But I don't like to be called a Marxist. For, I have also assimilated ideas from Phenomenology, Existentialism, Buddhism, Hinduism and so on. I don't like labels.

Coming back to your main question regarding the possibility of change from below, I must once again state that our young theologians have themselves to start the process of change. They must encounter a philosophy like Marxism, a philosophy which will challenge all their presuppositions, all inherited doctrines. Secondly, only if you confront people who question you from their own life situation, will a creative theology develop. In reality our theologians and priests do not get any real chance of being questioned. They have little contact with what is going on in the world around, not even in the town in which they live. Their contact is often limited to other theologians or to the world of nuns. Nuns seldom challenge you. They listen to you, applaud you, give you good break-fast, and you are happy. What is going on in the Catholic Church is a sort of theological incest, ideas circulating in the clerical corridors of priests and nuns,

without any real confrontation with people outside, with atheists, agnostics, students, Marxists, Maoists and so on. No theology can develop unless you face challenges from outside.

Such a move from young theologians will certainly lead to confrontation with the official Church. I consider such confrontation a positive thing. There should develop polarization in the Church. Polarization is a sign of life, a sign of health, and holds promises for the future. It shows Christianity is not dead. Hence I am happy over the confrontation between the radical Christians and the bishops of Kerala over the issue of fishermen. The bishops have been exposed, their links with the State Power and the rich made manifest. This will have a saving effect. Only through such confrontations will the Church grow.

P: But instead of questioning the existing systems, the seminaries and theological colleges in India today are affiliating themselves more and more to the western and Roman systems and Universities as well as to the Indian Universities. Vatican II, in fact, recommended the establishment of Catholic Universities, and faculties in every part of the World for the sake of evangelization, and the Major Seminaries all over the world, especially in the Third World, are seeking more and more the recognition of the Roman Congregation of Catholic Education for awarding ecclesiastical degrees. In the meantime attempts are also made in India to get recognition from the Indian Universities for our philosophical and theological programmes. How do you react to these trends and movements? According to your view, are we on the right track or on the wrong track? Will these trends and movements help theologizing in India?

K: I have only one remark to make concerning the attempts at centralization and standardization which would confer on ecclesiastical or secular degrees a certain prestige. In my view, the whole thing points to a fall from religious integrity. It means that seminary production is

being assimilated to capitalistic production. Capitalism is all for mass production, for standardized production. The church has, though unwittingly, been influenced by international capitalism. I am fully convinced that this sort of mass production of seminarians is absolutely irrelevant. It is also a betrayal of the spirit of Jesus.

On the question of awarding Roman degrees: I think the move presupposes Rome as the standard to which you have to conform. It sees Rome as the Centre where the Divine manifests itself fully, and from where revelation is carried through ever dwindling pipelines to the periphery. This way of thinking has to be called in question. If God reveals himself in the West, He reveals himself also to us in the East. And wherever God reveals himself, that is the centre, the standard. Any man or woman who confronts God speaks with authority, as Jesus spoke with authority, not like the Scribes and Pharisees who conformed themselves to a standardized doctrine. Anybody, any Indian, Sri Lankan, Vietnamese who encounters God speaks with authority and the centre is there. We should think of the Church with millions of such centres. So we have to question radically the theology underlying the search for Roman recognition. Another reason for seeking recognition from Roman Universities is prestige, which, again, is worldly value. I don't think it harmonizes with discipleship under Jesus.

As for seeking recognition from Indian Universities, it is meaningless. Why should we get recognition for theology from secular Universities? Theology is a reflection on our faith, a reflection on our encounter with God. As such, it cannot be equated with other sciences like biology, botany or chemistry. It cannot be even equated with philosophy. Therefore, there is no meaning in asking a secular university, which may be staffed by atheists, agnostics or Marxists, to evaluate our theology and recognize it. It is as meaningless as asking a team of prostitutes to interview candidates for a congregation of nuns. If we think of such a recognition, it is because we have

lost our original religious integrity, our sense of discipleship. We don't need any recognition. The truth we communicate is its own recognition.

P. You were speaking about theology as the reflection on our encounter with God, on our encounter with Jesus. Indian theology will be therefore the reflection of the Indian Christians on their faith, on their encounter with God and Jesus Christ. What we have today is a theology which is imported from outside, imported from the West. How do you envisage the development of a proper Indian theology?

K. First of all, I don't think that mere dialogue of Christian theologians with scholars of other religions will be of much help. Both parties, to a large extent, represent alienated thinking. They come with outdated and obsolete traditions and categories, they are also alienated from the masses, from ordinary people. Out of such dialogue only another alienated thinking can emerge. I don't deny that such dialogues may have marginal use. But no dynamic theology will develop from such dialogues. For developing a new theology in India we need, as mentioned earlier, to effect an epistemological rupture. For this two conditions must be met; a confrontation with Marxism which challenges all your presuppositions and exposure to the realities and challenges of the world outside. We need a new baptism of immersion in the Indian context. This new baptism, as in the case of Jesus, demands our identification with the world. We have to leave our huge institutions and settle down in the world outside in hostels, in flats, in the heart of towns with ordinary people sharing their anxieties, joys and sorrows. This kind of baptism of immersion is essential for the coming down of the Spirit as it was with Jesus. The Spirit came upon Jesus only after his immersion in Jordan which was a symbol of his identification with people in need of forgiveness of sins.

Here let me comment on the general tendency among theologians to find the point of insertion for Jesus in the Indian cultural and religious context. I have discussed

this in my book *Jesus and Cultural Revolution*. Indian theologians, indologists particularly, try to relate the message of Jesus to the dominant Brahmanic scriptural tradition, which is largely the ideology of the dominant castes, above all, of the Brahmins. The Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, Bhagavad Gita etc. are seen as the point of insertion for the Christian message. This, in my view, is a wrong approach. If there is a point of insertion for the teachings of Jesus, it is the culture of dissent which existed right from the beginning, in the culture of revolt against caste Brahmin domination, social inequality and economic exploitation. Indian theologians have ignored this culture of dissent represented by the Buddha, the Bhakti movement, the Harijan movement, and the revolt of the peasants and tribals. So immersion in the Indian situation is not simply an immersion in Vedic lore or culture, but an immersion in the creative currents in the Indian history, including those in our own times. This means a reversal of the trend hitherto followed.

P. Well, the question is how should we prepare the students in our seminaries for theologizing along this line. Do you believe that such a training could be given to our students in the present set up continuing more or less the present system of training and curriculum. If you think that such a training cannot be given in the present set up, have you any other model or alternative to suggest?

K. I don't think that the present institutional set up of seminaries is adequate for theologizing along the lines I have suggested. I envisage a different kind of formation which will not take candidates for priesthood out of their living context. Prospective candidates for priesthood will continue their life in the world, whether, they are students, clerks, teachers, workers, trade union leaders or doctors. Continuing their life in the world, they will seek training for priesthood without uprooting themselves from their life-context. This means that we have to overhaul the whole seminary system. Instead of a huge staff living in an institution, we should have gurus dispersed in different places who would guide the candi-

dates who come to them. During their spare time, weekends or holidays, these will sit with the guru, seeking his instructions and clarifying questions. Depending on the competence of the gurus, the students may go from one to another. This is the basic formation I envisage for all seminarians. Over and above this, you may have different institutes where you can spend one or two years to specialize in one field or another; depending on your talents and needs. This is what I envisage for the future. I don't have any ready-made model to propose. I would insist that the candidates for priesthood should not be taken out of their living context. The problem of bridging the gulf will not arise if we leave candidates where they are. If communists could train their cadres without seminaries, why couldn't we do the same. We don't need these huge seminaries. They are a dis-value and, I am sure, eventually they will die out. Of course, they may continue as specialized institutes. Besides the basic formation I have referred to, priests may need competence in certain auxiliary disciplines like sociology, psychology etc., depending on the kind of work they are going to do. For this they can go to a secular University or to a specialized institute. The model I propose may sound unrealistic or unpractical. But I believe this is the direction along which we have to move.

P. In the model or alternative you propose the candidates for priesthood are not taken out of their life-context, they continue their life and work in the world as students or workers in the office or in the factory or as teachers, doctors, lawyers, trade union leaders, social workers or even as political leaders. Do you envisage this continuity only during their training period or even during their priestly ministry? After their commission for priestly ministry do they get married, continue to live with their families? And during their training period do you envisage them living in their families, or do they live as individuals or as smaller groups in hostels or flats separated from their families? I know that you may not have the details of your model. Still, could you please spell it out more clearly?

K. Priests could continue their secular professions even after their commissioning for the priestly ministry in the narrow sense. Still, I would think in terms of pluralism in the way in which they commit themselves to the Kingdom. Some of them will continue with their secular professions and in that context fulfil their priestly, prophetic role. Others will be full-time priests entirely devoted to the cause of the Kingdom of God. And among these full-timers, again, some will be settled in flats in different areas and carry on work in their social milieu. Others may be itinerant, travelling from place to place as Jesus and his disciples did. We have to revive the practice of the wandering prophets of the early Church and of the disciples of Buddha. Some priests must move around, visiting villages, awakening the poor to their rights and duties, attending to their human needs, and opening their eyes to the dimension of transcendence. Thus among priests of the future some may be married, others unmarried; some may live with their families, others may live as individuals or in small teams in flats and apartments. But all of them will be in the world, not within big institutions separated from the world.

P. I can see very well the value of the model which you have suggested. But it seems to me that it is a model for a distant future, although I agree with you that the future of our seminary training will be along these lines, and the future of our big training institutions will not be very bright. But as responsible theologians we have to take seriously our present set up and our present training institutions and we should give concrete suggestions for the present in view of the present institutions at least for this transition period. What concrete steps and suggestions do you propose for a change in the present system of training?

K. First of all, I should say that seminarians should be involved in action in the world. They have to learn by doing and reflecting. Learning in the seminaries should not be simply by means of theoretical classes and lectures. The curriculum and time-table followed in the seminaries

today should be changed, giving prime importance to involvement in the world. You come back from your field of action to the seminary, you share your experiences, and reflect on them. You may need additional inputs. For this you have your professors. The inputs should be relevant. The problem today is that much of it is irrelevant. If the input is medieval Thomistic thinking and categories, there will, definitely, be a cleavage between it and the problems one faces in the field of action. Action outside will make the student question what is taught in class. In the class he is told that God loves the poor, the widow, and the orphan. But when he goes round slums, he realizes that the poor, the widow, and the orphan are uncared for both by human beings and, apparently, also by God. Then he will come back and say "What nonsense are you teaching. It does not tally with what I experience. If I go and tell the slum people, 'God loves you, the poor, the naked and the oppressed, they will slap me on my face'. This is how questions will arise from one's actual involvement. So I feel that at the very basic level of training there must be commitment and involvement in the world. Otherwise you will have to rethink the theology you learned in the seminary when you will be thirty or thirty-five, as it happened to me. That will be an anguishing process and will take another ten or fifteen years.

There are different ways of committing oneself to the Kingdom of God. It may be through organizing trade union movements, it may be by getting involved in the world of art or film making, it may be by working in the slums, it may be by involving in the dialogue between communal groups; it may be involvement with the student world, and in thousand other ways. Seminarians should be encouraged to develop their different talents or charisms and the curriculum must be adjusted to leave room for it. We cannot at the same time, maintain the system and let people go out for different commitments. We may have to make radical changes. Some courses may have to be dropped. Others may have to be shifted to evenings or night time. You can't ask every seminarian to go through all the courses. Certain courses may be irrelevant for some. You may have to give them an option.

In suggesting the involvement of the seminarians in the world, I am not being unrealistic. It is something already happening in our country. I have before me the example of the Jesuit Novitiate at Christ Hall, Calicut. I wish I were born later and were a novice today in Christ Hall: There novices join in Dharnas, they go out to organize fishermen. At 20 or 22 they reach a level of consciousness of which others shaped in the older mould could not have reached at thirty or forty.

Let me make one or two more concrete suggestions. In seminaries, we must teach students read the New Testament from the point of view of the oppressed, and make them encounter the historical Jesus who committed himself for the Kingdom of God unto death. This will have tremendous impact on young people. There are already some competent Bible scholars in our country who think along these lines. Another important requirement is the presence of a few dedicated professors in each seminary who will guide groups of students in their involvement in the real world. On the staff there must be at least one specialized in questions of justice and human rights. He must himself be engaged in relevant activities and projects. He could then guide a group of seminarians to involve in such activities. Another staff-member may be a literary man or an artist. He should guide those talented in that field. In every seminary there must be at least four or five staff members who are themselves involved in the life of the people around, and are able to guide seminarians in their particular fields. They could gradually influence others and function as catalysts of change. Thus change will come from below. I am confident that even in the present set up a lot can be done, if there are three or four committed teachers in each seminary.

Sebastian Kappen
7, 4th Cross
Narayanappa Block
Benson Town
Bangalore 650 046

Kuncheria Pathil
Dharmaram College
Bangalore 560 029

Religious Education in Hinduism Ancient and Modern

I. Education in Ancient India

Let me begin this short analysis of the history, method and content of ancient Indian Education with an Upaniṣadic passage. The sixth Chapter of *Chandogya Upaniṣad* begins thus: "Om. Once upon a time there was one *Śvetaketu* who was the grandson of *Aruṇa*. His father said to him: 'O *Śvetaketu*, go and live the life of a *Brahmacārin*. O my dear, there never was anyone in our family who did not study the Vedas and thus was only a nominal Brāhmin.' Thus at the age of twelve, after having gone (to the teacher's house), he came back at the age of twenty-four, having studied all the Vedas, but was conceited, arrogant and regarded himself as very learned. His father said to him, '*Śvetaketu*, my boy, I see that you are conceited, arrogant and regard yourself as very learned. Did you ask for that teaching (about the Supreme Being) through which what is unheard becomes heard, what is unthought of becomes thought of, what is unknown becomes known?'" The Upaniṣad narrates further that *Śvetaketu* did not know this sacred and secret teaching about Brahman and that with all humility and contrition begged his father to teach him this doctrine.

This story opens out to several salient features of the ancient educational system of India: Education was essential for the acceptance of male members of high caste families in the society, and real nobility and high social status are obtained only through proper education and not by money. For this boys were sent to a teacher away from the family. The process of learning lasted at least for twelve years. The initiation to Brahmacharihood had to take place at a particular age. Certain esoteric doctrines were not taught to all pupils.

For ancient Indians education meant mainly the study of the sacred scriptures of religion and, in later periods, also the acquaintance with the codes of conduct in society, in family and in personal life. Long period at *Gurukula* was dedicated to the study of *Śruti* and *Smṛti* texts. The *Śruti* literature included the four *Vedas*, *Brāhmaṇas*, *Araṇyakas* and *Upaniṣads*. The *Smṛti* literature is vast and varied which included mainly the Epics, *Purāṇas*, *Dharmaśāstras*, *Vedāṅgas* etc.

Adhikarin

Are you an *adhikārin* (one who is entitled, one who has the right) to study this particular branch of sacred science? This is a question often asked when one wishes to study a given body of sacred literature of Hinduism. The *Adhikāritvam* presupposes two requisites:

1. The *Arthitvam* means the genuine, intense desire to earn wisdom in that branch of sacred literature and the readiness to submit oneself uncompromisingly to the disciplines needed for the study and to the will of the Guru who is to lead him to the inner meaning of the sacred texts.
2. *Sāmarthyam* involves not only the intellectual ability to grasp the subject matter, but also freedom from impediments, the main impediment being the birth in a lower caste. It also demands that the candidate should meet the requirements for admission to this study. For example, one who studies *Vedānta* should be a male member of one of the three higher castes (i.e., *Brāhmaṇa*, *Kṣatriya* or *Vaiśya*); he should have received the *Upanayana Samskāra*, which is the rite of initiation for the study of vedic literature. Another requirement for the study of Vedānta is that the candidate should have learned the *Vedas*, *Brāhmaṇas* and *Mīmāṃsās* already in the prescribed manner. The sage Badarayana discusses this in detail in his *Vedānta Sūtras*. In *Brahma Sūtra* I.3. 25ff he discusses whether gods are *Adhikarins* for *Brahmavidyā* (the study of Vedānta) and concludes that they are entitled to this sacred knowledge. But *Brahma Sūtra* I. 3.33 ff takes up

the question of *Śudras* and decides that *Śudras* have no right to the study of Vedānta. A *śudra* boy, however intelligent, has no right to touch the Vedānta literature. But a brahmin boy, even if an idiot, should torture himself for securing a fair knowledge in these sacred books for recognition and acceptance in society.

Upanayana

Upanayana, which is one of the most important Hindu Samskaras, is also known by the names of *Brahmopadeśa* or sacred-thread-giving ceremony. It is the sacrament of initiation by which the candidate is formally introduced into and empowered to sacred education. The word "*upanayana*" actually means "leading the aspirant to" the sacred wisdom of Vedas or to the *Ācārya* who imparts this knowledge. The pupil begs the teacher for studentship and the teacher officially and publicly accepts him as his *Śiṣya*. By this ritual the boy enters into the *Brahmacarya-āśrama*, which is the period of studentship¹. Later writers, as Dr. Raj Bali Pandey says, interpreted the samskara of *upanayana* as the second birth through the *Gāyatri Mantra*². Manu says: "In the vedic birth of the student, symbolized by wearing the girdle of *Muñja* grass, *Savitrī* is the mother and teacher is the father."³ But learning of the sacred books was the first and foremost aim of *upanayana*. *Apastamba Dharma Sutra* says: "*Upanayana* is the sacrament of a person desirous of learning."⁴ Besides this main goal, this ritual may also aim at the

1. The word 'Brahma' originally meant Veda or vedic mantra. One who is devoted to Veda and studies it, is a Brahmacarin. "*Brahma, Veda-Tadadhyaniyamam carti iti Brahmacari.*" Celibacy is one of the important conditions for the study of Veda. But later the word "Brahmacarin" itself is used for a celibate man.

2. The Savitrī mantra is: "*Tat Savitr̥varenyam bhargo devasya dhīmahi, Dhiyo yo nah Pracopayat*" - "Let us meditate on the most excellent glory of God. May He stimulate our intellect."

3. Manusmṛti III. 170

4. Apastamba Dharma Sastra I. 1.

observance of certain vows, purification of life, renouncing the comfortable life at home and accepting the disciplined, rigorous life-style at the Gurukula etc.

Manu, who is supposed to be the greatest law-giver of brahmanic religion, says that a *Brahmin* boy should be initiated to the study of Vedas at the age of eight, *Kṣatriya* boy at the age of eleven and the *Vaiśya* at the age of twelve⁵. Different explanations are given for these differences in the age. Dr. Raj Bali Pandey says that the reason for this differentiation of age is more practical than the presumed intellectual superiority of Brahmins. In most of the cases the teacher of a brahmin boy is his own father. So it is easier to start the education at a younger age. But *Kṣatriyas* and *Vaiśyas* have to send their boys to a Brahmin teacher elsewhere for vedic training. And the separation of the children at a very tender age was naturally difficult for both the parents and the children. Secondly Brahmins, being the teachers and priests of the society, needed longer and more rigorous training in the vedic lore. The professions of the *Kṣatriyas* and *Vaiśyas* demanded less educational qualifications⁶.

"Therefore to know that, let him, with sacrificial fuel in hand, approach a teacher who is learned in the Scriptures and who is established in Brahman."⁷ These are the words of *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*: "From darkness to darkness he goes, when an ignorant person initiates. Therefore let one desire an initiator, who comes from a good family, who is learned and who is self-controlled."⁸ So the teacher should be learned in Scriptures and should be a man of sound character. If the *Ācārya* himself is ignorant and is a man of dubious character, how can he dispel the darkness of *avidyā* from the mind of his *śiṣya*?

5. Manusmṛti II. 36

6. Pandey, Raj Bali: Hindu Samskaras, Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi 1969, p. 118 ff.

7. Mundaka Up, I. 2. 12.

8. Apastamba Dharmasutra I. 1. 11-13.

After certain preparatory ceremonies, the candidate approaches the Guru and says: "I have come here for taking up the studentship. I will be a student."⁹ The Guru accepts him and offers him the *Kaupina* and says: "In the way in which *Brhaspati* put the garment of immortality on *Indra*, thus I put this garment on thee, for the sake of long life, old age, strength and splendour."¹⁰ Originally an upper garment was given which was made up of deer skin, which was the symbol of deep spirituality and great scholarship. But later, normally, the Brahmin boy was given a *kaṣāya* (saffron) cloth, the Ksatriya a *mañjiṣṭha* (dyed with madder) cloth and the Vaiśya a yellow cloth. The colour has specific significance with reference to the particular caste.

The next ceremony is investing the boy with a girdle. It should remind him of his vows of the studentship and keep him firm and faithful to his vows and duties. This should also protect him from evil powers and keep him pure. One of the most significant rituals of the upanayana is the investiture of the sacred thread called *upavita* or *yajñopavita*. The colour and material of this thread is different according to the caste of the pupil. The tradition is that this thread should be spun by a virgin brahmin girl and tied together by a pious brahmin. There are actually three threads representing the three *guṇas* - *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. The number three should also remind the boy of his three duties - the duties to *Ṛsis*, to ancestors and to gods.

A staff which is the symbol of a watchman is given to the boy to make him aware that he is now entrusted with the sacred duty of protecting the sacred scriptures. Staff is also the sign of a pilgrim. With the initiation, the student now launches a long pilgrimage in search of wisdom, sanctity and finally eternal liberation.

9. Paraskara Grhyasutra II. 2. 9.

(quoted in "Pandey, Raj Bali : *op. cit.*, p. 129.

10. *Ibid.* II. 2. 10

The next important ceremony is exhortation of the *Gāyatrī* or *Sāvitrī*. But before that, there are some simple symbolic acts. The teacher first pours water into the hands of the student signifying the purification needed for the study of Vedas. Secondly the *acūrya* touches the heart of his *śiṣya* to symbolize the cordial relationship that should exist between them. Then the teacher asks the pupil to mount the stone with the words. "Step on this stone. Be firm like stone, destroying the enemies."¹¹ The student is supposed to be steadfast in the pursuit of wisdom. With these introductory rites, the most sacred mantra *Gāyatrī* (*Sāvitrī*) is exhorted in the right ear of the student by the teacher. By learning this mantra, the boy is said to be born a second time (*Dvija*). After the teaching of *Sāvitrī*, the student is now entitled to tend the sacred sacrificial fire. The student then solemnly makes his vows. He promises to study the sacred science diligently, to obey the Guru uncompromisingly, to tend the sacrificial fire carefully, to keep up celibacy strictly and to be satisfied with simple dress, food and habitation.

Process of Study

After the initiation ceremony the student is received into the household of his guru where he has to undergo the strict, long programme of education and practise the rigid rules of moral, religious, hygienic and social disciplines. He has the obligation to remain with the teacher as long as the study lasts. Total submission and blind obedience are essential. Sage Apastamba in his *Dharma-Sutras* says that a student should occupy only a lower seat than that of the teacher¹². Gautama exhorts that the good disciple should rise up in the morning before the Guru is up and go to bed after the Guru has retired for night rest. He has to embrace the feet of the Guru every morning. If the teacher walks, he has to walk after him.

11. Manava Grhyasutra I. 22. 10 (quoted in Pandey Raj Bali, *op. cit.* p. 136.

12. Apastamba Dharmasutra I. 1. 1.

He should never pronounce the name of the teacher. He has to execute many menial works in the household of his Guru, as fetching water and fuel, sweeping and cleaning the house and sacrificial hall etc¹³.

The student has to beg for alms and thus live on charity and eat whatever he got with the permission of the Guru. But he has to avoid the use of meat, honey, perfumes, garlands, sleeping in day-time, a carriage for travel, shoes and also avoid all evil tendencies like anger, inordinate love for others, covetousness etc. He should not play musical instruments and should not indulge in dancing and singing¹⁴. Above all he has to concentrate all his energies on the *Svadharmā* of his *āśrama*, namely study.

The teacher too has responsibilities and obligations towards his pupil. He has to consider the student as his own son and to instruct him with great care the texts of sacred scriptures, the rules of purification, rules and regulations for good conduct, methods of fire worship and *sandhya* prayers. The supreme duty of the *acarya* is to dispel the darkness of *avidyā* from the mind of the student. Giving *vidyā* into a good vessel (*satpatre vidyā-dānam*), that is, giving wisdom to a good disciple is the greatest *dharma* of a teacher. Referring to the attitude of the teacher towards students Manu says: "Created beings must be taught (by the teacher) for their well-being without giving them any pain. A teacher who wants to abide by the vedic law should use sweet and mild speech (for instruction). He whose speech and thoughts are pure and guarded will gain the whole reward promised by *Vedānta*. Let him not, even if he is pained, use harsh words painful to others. Let him not injure others in thought or deed..."¹⁵

The ancient system of education in India demanded that the correction of the student should not be done

13. Gautama Dharmasutra II. 25ff.

14. *Ibid* II. 35ff. Manusmṛti II. 177ff.

15. *Ibid* II. 156-161.

through corporal punishment. Gautama and Manu say that, if no other way is possible to bring the student to the right track, the teacher may punish him with thin rope or cane or split bamboo, but only in the back of the boy and never in front or in noble parts of the body¹⁶.

The teacher was not supposed to extract fees from the students for his noble work. But when the period of study was over and the student was successful in his endeavour, before the *Samāvartana Samskāra* (the formal ending of the studentship and returning home from the household of the teacher), the student was expected to give a proper gift to his teacher.

Speaking about the actual procedure of a class, sage Gautama narrates: "With his right hand the student should hold the left hand of his preceptor, but leaving his thumb free. Then the student shall say to his teacher thus: 'Respected Lord, recite.' He (student) shall fix his eyes and mind on the teacher. He should then touch with *Kuśa* grass the places of vital airs of his body. He should then hold his breath three times for the duration of fifteen moments. He should sit on leaves of *Kuśa* grass, the ends of which are pointed to the eastern direction. The words 'Om' and 'Satya' are to be pronounced, before uttering the five *vyāhṛtis*. Every morning the feet of the teacher should be embraced by the student, as also at the beginning and end of a lesson of Veda. Once the teacher grants permission, the student should sit to the right side of the teacher facing towards east or towards north and then he must recite *Sāvitrī*. These acts must be performed at the beginning of the lesson of Vedas."¹⁷

Teaching and learning (*Svādhyāpravacane*) were considered as sacred liturgical rituals, the rules of which were to be followed meticulously. These small ceremonies stressed the sacredness of the texts taught and the solemnity and

16. Gautama Dharmasutra II. 42; Manusmṛti VIII. 292

17. Gautama Dharmasutra I.46ff.

grandeur with which the vedic texts were orally handed down to us. In fact the students were totally at the mercy of the preceptor. Writing and printing were not known in those days. The only means to have access to this sacred wisdom was the words of mouth of the teacher, who in turn received it orally from his teacher.

Vedas and Vedangas

The hymns of the Vedas, especially of *Rg Veda*, were handed down in individual families by the family priests independently. Writing was unknown in India then. It was in the 7th or 6th century B.C., that certain enterprising brahmin took the initiative to collect all these hymns and put them together in their present form. The legendary sage Vyasa is said to have done this compilation. But even after the compilation, the brahmin families remained faithful to their particular branches (*Śākhās*) of the Vedas. Later they developed the books of *Brāhmaṇas*, *Aranyakas* and *Upaniṣads* to each branch of the Vedas. Then each vedic branch developed its own particular rules and regulations for domestic rituals, social customs, religious observances, penances for sins etc. They are called the *Dharma Śāstras*. This amounts to say that each family of the higher castes, especially the brahmin family, has its own particular branch of Veda, with its own *Brāhmaṇas*, *Aranyakas*, *Upaniṣads* and *Dharmaśāstras*.

Taittiriya Brahmana and *Taittiriya Upanisad* exhort: "One should study the *Svādhyāya*" and "one should not neglect the *Svādhyāya*."¹⁸ By the word *Svādhyāya* normally the Vedas in general are meant. But *Svādhyāya* could also mean the study of one's own particular branch of Vedas and vedic literature.

It is also possible that it was the Brahmins who wrote the *Dharma-Sastras*. So naturally they apportioned to themselves higher posts, greater privileges, divine sanctity and in many cases immunity from social sanctions in the civic

18. Taittiriya Up. 1.11.

and social life of man. They made themselves priests and teachers of the society. Only they were entitled to teach, to offer sacrifices and to receive gifts¹⁹. They, thus demanded by law, greater honour and respect from all others. So the educational system was totally in the hands of the Brahmins.

Slowly the so-called *Vedangas* (members of Veda) too came into existence. All the six *Vedangas* are in one way or other related to the correct understanding of the vedic texts and the right performances of vedic rituals. Thus *Śikṣa* (Vedic phonetics) was written to provide rules for correct pronunciation of vedic mantras. *Vyākaraṇa* (grammar) was needed for the correct usage of vedic sanskrit. Panini is said to be the author of these two *Vedangas*. *Nirukta* deals with the etymology of the words contained in the Vedas. Yaska is the greatest exponent of *Nirukta*. *Chandas*, written by sage Pingala, is the science of prosody and metre of vedic hymns. *Jyotiṣa* (astronomy) is written by sage Garga and was needed to calculate and fix the auspicious time for vedic sacrifices. And *Kalpa* interpreted vedic rituals, and vedic codes of conduct for social and family life. So in the course of time education consisted of not simply the study of the Vedas alone but also the auxiliary and allied subjects like the *Vedangas*.

Specific time was allotted to the study of each subject. The *Sruti*, which constitutes the most sacred portion of sacred literature, is to be taught only in day time. The day time of the ancestors (*Pitaraḥ*) is the white half of the month and the day time of the gods is *Uttarayana* (that is when the sun is in the northern side). That means the Vedas are to be taught and learned only in the day time

19. The six duties of a Brahmin are: offering sacrifice, causing others to offer sacrifice (i.e., meeting the expense of the sacrifice offered by others), giving presents, receiving presents, teaching and learning. Yajanam yajanam danam

Visistacca Pratigrahaḥ!

Adhyapanam Cadhyayanam

VipraKarma Prakirtitam!!

of the white halves of the months of *Uttarāyana*. The rest of the time of the year and months should be used for the study of Vedangas and other subjects²⁰.

Ingenious methods have been developed to commit the Vedic mantras to memory. There are four kinds of recitation (*Pāṭhas*). In the *Padapāṭha* each consonant is pronounced separately, without compound words. In the *Kramapāṭha*, two letters are pronounced in one unit and the second letter is always repeated as the first letter in the second unit as a, gni; gni, mi; mi, le etc., (i.e., 1,2;2,3;3,4...). In the *Jaṭapāṭha* the letters are pronounced in the following order: a, gni, gni, a, a, gni; gni, mi, mi, gni, gni, mi etc., (that is 1,2,2,1,1,2; 2,3,3,2,2,3...). In the last *Ghanapāṭha*, letters are uttered as a, gni, gni, a, a, gni, mi, mi, gni, a, a, gni, mi; gni, mi, mi, gni, mi, le, le, mi, gni, gni, mi etc., (1,2,2,1,1,3,3,2,1,1,2,3;2,3,3,2,2,3,4,4,3,2,2,3...) ²¹. This was a very clever and extremely effective method invented by resourceful vedic scholars to protect the mantras from interpolations in the process of oral transmission and thus to guarantee the loyal and complete handing down of the vedic hymns. In fact the capacity of the hindus especially of brahmins to learn Sanskrit verses and hymns by heart is gigantic and without parallels in the world. Even today there are brahmin pandits who can recite the whole Vedas by heart, and who can even recite one Veda in the *Ghanapāṭha*

20. The progress of the sun to the north of equator is Uttarayana. Dakṣinayana is movement of the sun to the south. Two months make a Rtu and three Rtus make an Ayana and three Ayanas constitute a year.

“Ata urdhvam tu chandamsi suklesu niyatah pattet
Vedangani ca Sarvani Kṛṣṇapaksesu sampattet
Rfr. also Manusmṛti IV. 95 ff.

21. Correct and meticulous pronunciation of the vedic word is essential for obtaining the desired result of chanting the vedic hymn. The rule is:

“Ekassabdah samyakjnatah susthuprayukta svargaloke ca Kamadhuk bhavati.” A vedic hymn or word well-understood and correctly pronounced fulfills all your desires like the Kamadhenu.”

arrangement. More than that, there are at least a few experts who can say from memory a particular letter used in a given line of the verse of the hymn. For example, if we ask him for the particular letter used in Rg Veda V Mandala III hymn VIII Verse III line seventh letter, he can recall it instantly. But it is not necessary that he knows the meaning of the texts. And this type of unusual expertise is fast disappearing.

I have mentioned in the beginning that certain esoteric, secret knowledge is revealed only to selected students. At least in the Upanisads, there is ample evidence to support this theory. In *Chāndogya* Upaniṣad VIII. 1. the great sage Narada approaches Sanātkumara (who is supposed to be one of the four sons of Brahma himself) to learn Brahman. He says: "Venerable Sir, I know *Rgveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Samaveda* and *Atharvaveda* as the fourth. (I know) the Epics and Puranas as the fifth. I know Grammar, *the rules of the worship of the ancestors, Mathematics, the science of Portents, the science of Treasures, Logic, the science of Ethics, Etymology, the knowledge of Vedāṅgas, physical science, science of War, science of Stars, science of related Serpents and the fine Arts - All this I know, revered Sir. But, Sir, I am only a knower of the verbal texts and I am not a knower of Brahman." Narada was a scholar in all the branches of learning. But nobody taught him the means and methods to know Brahman. In *Praśna* Upaniṣad six learned men came to the old sage Pippalada with certain questions concerning the ultimate cause of the universe and about the *summum bonum* of human life. But Pippalada declined to answer these questions and demanded them to stay at his hermitage for one year in prayer, penance and meditation, and then if he found them worthy, he would answer their questions. In *Kaṭha* Upaniṣad, Naciketas asked Yama about the life after death and the means to attain *mukti*. Yama adamantly refused to answer him first. But when he found that Naciketas was spiritually mature enough to accept this teaching, he instructed him. We find also numerous passages in the Upanisads to support this view.

Chandogya says: "Therefore the father as Brahman shall communicate this doctrine only to the eldest son and not to any one else."²² "This shall be taught to no one except the son or the disciple."²³ Impart this secret to no one else except to a son or a disciple."²⁴

One thing is very clear from these elucidations: proper education, which was often accompanied by long and vigorous discipline, was one of the greatest good of human life. It might be considered as the fifth *Puruṣārtha*, value or goal of man, the four normal *Puruṣārthas* being *Artha*, *Kāma*, *Dharma* and *Mokṣa*.

II. Religious Education in Hinduism Today

Time has brought about tremendous changes in the life style, thought patterns, attitudes and ideals of man. Erudition in the vedic lore is no more regarded as a great goal to be aspired for. Children today are inundated by so many modern secular subjects that religious education in the tenor of ancient times cannot even make an appearance in the formative period of a child. And a man who wants to impose on his child the traditional course of education, however holy and orthodox he might be, would be considered a fanatic bent on destroying the future of the child. An orthodox brahmin in the traditional dress and patterns of behaviour is considered to be archaic and is looked down with derision by the younger members of his own family. I know a good and learned brahmin who was divorced by his modern wife, who herself was the daughter of a very orthodox brahmin, because he insisted on keeping the traditional tuft of hair in the crown of the head (*śikhā*). Scriptural education and scholarship in religious philosophy alone normally do not bring about material gains for livelihood nor enhance the image of a person in society. Success and status in life depend more

22. Chandogya Up. III, 11.5

23. Brhadaranyaka Up. VI. 3.12.

24. Svetasvetara Up. VI. 22.

on the technical, and scientific education and job-oriented special training and thus securing top posts in business and industry and lucrative jobs in public establishments.

Consequently there is a forced dichotomy of ideals in the life of honest men. On the one side they want to preserve and practise the time-honoured traditional way of life, which is considered by the society at large as obsolete; on the other hand, they have to conform themselves to the modern way of life to make a living and be successful in life. There are officers and public servants who try to keep up the traditional values in dress, food-habits, rituals etc., at home, but when they go to the office, they remove the religious garment and follow the main stream of modern life. My own teacher of Sanskrit and Vedanta philosophy, who is an eminent scholar in *Vyākaraṇa Vedanta* and *Alankara*, laments that none of his sons opted for Sanskrit studies. He traces the history of his family back to one of the disciples of the great Acārya Ramanuja. All throughout and in all generations there have been reputed men of letters in all of the branches of sacred sciences. But now this line of traditional scholarship is being cruelly cut off. This does not mean that education in vedic lore and sacred scriptures is totally non-existent in modern India. The traditional education in most of the branches of the Sanskrit literature is available, but with immense differences.

Pathasalas and Mahapathasalas

Today this type of education is offered not in *Gurukula* but in public institutions called *Pāṭhaśālas* and *Mahā-pāṭhaśālas* (Sanskrit Colleges). In Karnataka there are Mahapathasalas in Bangalore, Mysore, Melkote, Gokarna, Siddhaganga, Adicunchanagiri etc. Most of them are run by the Karnataka Board of Sanskrit Examinations. The full course in such Sanskrit colleges needs thirteen long years. The introductory course (*Prathama*) consists of three years. In the second stage (*Kāvya*), which needs two years, the stress is on teaching Sanskrit dramas, *mahākāvya*s and *campus*. *Sāhitya* examination is the next

course which demands three years of learning especially in Grammar, Logic, Alamkara, Vṛtta etc. *Vyakaraṇa* and *Tarka* are essential for any other further specializations (*Paniniyam Kanādam ca Sarvaśāstropakarakam*). These three courses of total eight years are common to all students. The next five years are set apart for specialization in a particular branch, like *Vyākaraṇa*, *Nyāya*, *Alamkara*, *Vedanta* systems, *Vedas* etc. At the end of these five years, the successful candidates are awarded the title of 'Vidvān'. All the examinations, both written and viva voce of Vidvān are conducted in Sanskrit language only. The medium of instruction too is Sanskrit.

But the sad fact is that only very few are turning up for the higher courses and specializations. For example, in examinations of 1984, only three candidates appeared for the examinations of Vidvan in *Viśiṣṭādvaita* in the whole of Karnataka. Many courses are eliminated because no student was registered for these for many consecutive years. The Chamarejindra Sanskrit College of Bangalore, which is 105 years old, and which was a prominent institution of Bangalore in olden days, had conducted advanced courses in *Buddhism*, *Samkhya*, *Mimāṃsā* etc. But these are now removed from the curriculum due to scarcity of candidates.

It is interesting to note that Sundays are not holidays for these *Mahāpaṭhaśālas*. The *anadhyayana* days (days on which there is no reading or studying) are the full moon and new moon days and the preceding and succeeding days of these two days.

The five years of specialization in any of four Vedas consists of only learning by heart the texts of vedic mantras in their particular sound symbols. The meaning of the mantras are not taught. For Vedantins like Ramanuja and others *Svādhyaya* means only the learning of the words by repeating the mantras chanted by the Guru, (*Uccāraṇa-nuccāraṇa-pūrvakaakṣararāśigrahaṇam*), and not the meaning. While the *Mimāṃsakas*, insist on learning the meaning too.

Adhikarins today

The Sanskrit education including the vedic and vedanta courses are today open to all, irrespective of caste and creed. Śūdras and students belonging to other religions and even harijans can join to any of the branches. But still all the scholars of repute in all branches of Sanskrit literature are brahmins. Very few non-hindus join these *Mahāpāṭhaśālas* for traditional training in hindu scriptures. (Of course there are many who join the University Colleges to secure degrees of B. A., or M. A. in Sanskrit or Indian Philosophy which is naturally taught in English). Consequently there is friction and tension between the orthodox brahmin and non-brahmin teachers. Just one year back the *Veera-śaiva* (Lingayat) students of the Sanskrit Colleges of Karnataka led an agitation against the brahmin teaching staff, their allegation being that these brahmin professors and teachers are reluctant to teach non-brahmins, especially *Veera-śaivas* and that the discrimination against them in classes and examinations are unforgivable.

At least in the case of some scholars of Vedas and Vedanta systems this allegation is partially true. We have seen that the *Adhikārins* for learning the sacred science are only the male members of the first three higher castes. This mentality is not totally dead. A great *advaita* scholar from Bangalore was the principal of the Sanskrit College at Varanasi for some years. It is said all throughout, he ingeniously avoided lectures on Vedānta, because there happened to be a few students who were not caste hindus.

My teacher in Vedānta is a very orthodox and pious brahmin, who even today conscientiously carries out all the duties of a Vaiṣṇava-brahmin householder including the five great sacrifices (*Pañcamahāyajña*). As I requested him to teach me Vedānta he answered: "You are a Christian, but have approached me with great *Śraddha* and I cannot refuse it. Legally I am not supposed to do it. Please tell others that you are studying *Tarka* with me (which is con-

sidered to be a secular subject) and not Vedanta. If my colleagues and members of my caste come to know that you are my *śiṣya* in Vedanta, they can create trouble for me. We will start the lesson on an auspicious day." But somehow the fact leaked out. When the others took him to task, he answered, "Anyone who is devoted to *Paramātmān* and who has regard and faith in the sacred scriptures is a Brahmin. Any brahmin of this sort can become my student!''.

The late Maharaja Parikṣit of Cochin used to conduct the *Vakhyārtha-Sabhas* (debate-sessions of the scholars). When the debate was on Vedanta, he used to instruct the speakers not to quote from the Upaniṣads, as there were usually, śudras among the audience. I have also heard that one of the *swamijis* of a great Muti refused a brahmin lady, who happened to be a scholar in Vedanta and Sanskrit, to explain (in Sanskrit) the meaning of a Brahma Sutra in an assembly of Pundits. But on the whole, we should say that the treasures of the hindu sacred scriptures are now open to all.

Guru - Sisya Relationship

A few words should be also said about the Guru-Śiṣya relationship today. It is true that the bond between the preceptor and the disciple is not so cordial and strong as it was in the ancient times. This is partly because of the money-mindedness of the teachers. Not many *acaryas* teach for the joy of imparting the wisdom he possesses. The sacred knowledge is bartered for money. Secondly even without the help of a guru one can gain a fair knowledge in any branch of learning with the help of the numerous printed books that are available now in Sanskrit and in other languages. And I think that not many *Gurus* and *Sisyas* can recite the beautiful prayer and peace invocation of the Black Yajurveda books, which runs like this:

"Om. May He protect us both (Guru and Śiṣya).
May He nourish us both.

May we both work together with greater courage.
 May our study be effulgent.
 May we never hate each other.
 Om, Peace, Peace, Peace."

Still I believe that the guru exerts tremendous influence in the life of the student. Very often this relationship is quite personal. The first question usually asked to a student of traditional Indian education is about his teacher. Even masters of great renown introduce themselves in the circle of scholars as disciples of such and such teachers. The name of the guru always evokes in a true disciple the fine feelings of love, respect and adoration. A day in the hindu calendar, known as the *Gurupurnima* is specifically set apart for remembering and honouring the guru. Every devout hindu begins an auspicious act with the respectful remembrance of Guru. Every author of Sanskrit works, starts his writing paying homage to his Guru by a *maṅgaśloka*. It should also be noted here that rivalries between scholars, especially scholars of the same branch of learning and between their disciples, are also not uncommon.

Mutts and Asrams

The common understanding is that hinduism is a religion without any organization and without proper leadership and hierarchy. This is only partly true. There exist in each system of Vedanta numerous Mutts. The *Swamijis* of these Mutts are usually very rich and influential and often scholars and saintly men. The chief Mutts of Advaita in South India are Kanchi Kamakoti and Sringeri Mutts; Parakala Mutt of Mysore, Andavan Mutt of Srirangam etc., are Viśiṣṭādvaita Mutts. Mādhva Vedanta has great Mutts and Asrams in Uduppi, Mantralaya, Bangalore etc. The Veera Śaivas of Karnataka own many Mutts, the important ones being that of Siddhaganga, Sirigere, Chitradurga, Bangalore etc.

All these Mutts and Asrams have an array of disciple-families, who profess allegiance and loyalty to these Mutts and extend financial support to them. The members

of these families always seek advice and directions from the heads of the Mutts in matters of religion, ethics, customs and domestic rituals. Therefore the religious, spiritual and moral formation of the members of these dependent families is positively influenced and affected by these Mutts and Swamijis. Besides providing this basic grass-root-level inspiration and influence on the life of certain families, these Mutts and Asrams now-a-days take great care to propagate and popularize the religion, culture and ideals of Hinduism. (Perhaps one of the weaknesses of these Mutts is that it seems, they are sometimes, too much interested in canvassing and procuring well-to-do families as disciples). It should also be noted that certain traditional, orthodox brahmin families too play the role of Gurus to a number of other families of the same caste and wield immense influence in the religious education of these satellite families.

Vakhyartha Sabhas

Vākhyārtha Sabha or *Vākhyārthagṛṣṭi* is the assembly of the traditional scholars in different branches of Indian Philosophy for conducting discussions, debates and inter-locutions in Sanskrit language on given topics. Such *sabhas* are periodically organized and sponsored usually by the heads of great Mutts in different parts of the country, like Sringeri, Mantralaya, Udupi, Tirupathi and so on. These assemblies in fact offer opportunities to the pundits for deepening their knowledge and help them for the ongoing process of self-education. Thorough knowledge of the subject, good mastery of the Sanskrit language and the ability to call to memory the scriptural texts instantly etc., are essential to be successful in this highly skilled performance.

Recently the *Tirupathi Tirumula Devasthanam* (T.T.D) has launched a very ambitious programme for preserving and developing traditional higher education in Sanskrit-subjects. It invited prominent traditional scholars to teach their wisdom using the traditional methodology to worthy and

interested candidates, who have already a fair knowledge of the subject and have passed the prescribed advanced examination in the particular subject. Both scholars and students are offered fitting remunerations for their efforts. Such efforts to resuscitate the traditional educational system and religious formation may bring about new interest among youth to opt for such training.

New Movements and Programmes

In recent years many hindu establishments like Rāmakriṣṇa Mission, Cinmaya Mission, Divine life Society, (of Sivananda Asrama), Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Hindu Seva Pratiṣṭhanam etc., are employing new methods, programmes and courses of action to reinvigorate, rejuvenate and revitalize the hindu culture, religion and heritage. Through their programmes and untiring enthusiasm, they are really contributing great service for the *Sanatana-dharma*. The *Hindu Seva Pratiṣṭhanam* takes particular care to spread the Sanskrit language. Its basic message is that Sanskrit is not a difficult language; everybody can learn it and use it in day-to-day life. They conduct seminars and camps (śibiram) to bring Sanskrit to all. They claim that after the ten-day-camps even ordinary house-wives are able to converse in simple Sanskrit. It is said that by their constant and strenuous efforts, there is one or two villages in Karnataka State, where almost everybody can communicate in Sanskrit language. Thus Hinduism, which is the oldest religion of the world, accepts new forms and methods of communication to convey the age-old values of human life.

Augustine Thottakara

Dharmaram College
Bangalore—560 029

Freedom of Expression and Censorship in the Church*

Jesus Christ proclaimed to 'men and women that truth would set them free. In the Indian religious thought liberation as the ultimate goal of man is related to, sometimes identified with, the knowledge of truth. Only truth can bring about liberation. Conversely, the attainment as well as the personal realization of truth is a laborious task, for which freedom together with its ambiguity and pain is inevitable. For truth cannot be imposed from the outside; nor can it be appropriated as a possession, but can only be realized.

With regard to truth, freedom and self-realization or salvation, the position of the Christian Church is not without serious blame and needs to be critically evaluated. This article is a brief glance at the history of censorship in the Catholic Church with some reflections on this practice.

I. Censorship: some historical notes

Censorship is taken here in its restricted sense as referring to the control exercised by the ecclesiastical authority over the publication of a work by the examination and judging of it (*censura praevia*), or after its publication by repressing or prohibiting it (*censura subsequens*). We deal here primarily with *censura praevia*.

1. General legislation

Although the principle of pre-censorship existed in the Church from the days of antiquity, it was not imposed

* This article was included in the plan of the previous issue on "Truth That Sets Us Free" but could not be published for want of space.

upon the entire Church through official legislation until the appearance of printing in 15th century¹. The law on pre-censorship of books appeared in 16th century. It was completely re-organized by Pope Leo XIII in 1897 in the Constitution "Duties and Functions". It then passed, with some modifications, into the legislation enacted in the Code of canon law of 1917. In this Code canons 1384-1394 dealt with pre-censorship and canons 1395-1405 with the prohibition of books.

The section dealing with censorship starts with canon 1384 which asserts the Church's right to pre-censorship: The Church has the right to demand that no books, which it has not previously examined and approved be published by the faithful; and the right to prohibit on just grounds any book published by anyone. The right of the Church to censor books is not proved here, but is based on two arguments: the one from natural law² and the other from the supernatural mission of the Church³.

The censorship of books etc. (see canon 1385) is said to be not only the Church's right; but also her duty. The Code itself gives evidence to this by placing the canon on pre-censorship under the general heading of the teaching magisterium of the Church (Part IV of Book III). Accordingly, it belongs to her duty to guard and to expound the revealed doctrine: Christ the Lord has entrusted the deposit of faith to the Church, so that she may, with the unfailing assistance of the Holy Spirit, guard the revealed doctrine and faithfully teach it (can. 1322).

2. Individual legislation

Before the general legislation of the Code concerning censorship there existed particular legislations and indivi-

1. Cf. D. H. Wiest, *The Pre-censorship of Books* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1953), p. I.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 34

3. *Ibid.*

dual instances of obligatory pre-censorship. Legislation was enacted for the religious orders, the medieval universities and for certain dioceses. It seems that the first religious group to have legislation respecting pre-censorship was the Franciscan order (13th century)⁴. The first case of legislation imposing censorship was the Bull of Pope Alexander VI (1492-1503) applying to four German dioceses⁵. What he did was to re-issue the constitution of Innocent VIII (1482-1492) for the reason that it was not observed and that many allegedly heretical books were published in the provinces⁶. The non-observance seems to be also the reason for the numerous papal Bulls and Conciliar legislations imposing pre-censorship in the 15th and 16th centuries. We have thus the legislation of the 5th General Council of Lateran which repeated the previous legislation adding to it more stringent sanctions for observation⁷; the legislation of Trent (1545-1563); the legislation of Pope Paul IV (1559-1565) who drew up also the first formal index of forbidden books; the legislation of Pius V, Gregory XIII and Sixtus V. It was Pius V who established the Sacred Congregation of the Index on March 5, 1575. The other popes who enacted laws on pre-censorship are Clement VIII, Urban VIII, Alexander VII and Pius X. The popes have not only enacted laws concerning

4. *Ibid.*, p. 15

5. F. Sachse, *Die Anfänge der Buchercensur in Deutschland* (Leipzig, 1871), pp. 10-11

6. *Ibid.*, P. 19; cf. also Carlos Josaphat Pinto de Oliveira, "Le premier Document Pontifical sur la Presse: La Constitution 'Inter Multiplices d' Innocent VIII, *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Theologiques*, Vol L, 1966, pp. 628:637

7. This is the first solemn act of the ecclesiastical magisterium making the obligation of censorship a law for the entire Church. (Cf. Andre Sigmond, "Reflexion theologique sur les motivations de la censure". George Suffert et alii. *Censure et liberte d'expression*, Recherches et debats du Centre Catholique des Intellectuels Francais, Desclée de Brouwer, 1970 p. 150),

ensorship but also issued official communications to condemn books and writings which they judged to be dangerous for the faithful⁸.

3. Voluntary pre-censorship

The obligatory pre-censorship through official legislation appeared only after the 12th century. But before that there functioned a kind of voluntary pre-censorship which was more or less an official examination of the work, made either by some lawful authority or a private person deemed by the author to be competent⁹. This was done through the initiative of the authors themselves and it was mainly to obviate the danger of repressive censorship later¹⁰. The fear of a repressive censorship and the desire to avoid it was very evident in the formulae of humility found in the introductions of works in the 12th century¹¹.

4. The principle of censorship

In fact, the principle of pre-censorship existed and was invoked from the beginning in the history of the Church inasmuch as certain works were presumed good and others harmful. This principle is contained in the Muratorian Fragment (2nd cent.), known for its biblical canon, as it disapproved the works of heretics. It is put to a wider application in the Apostolic Constitution, (end of 4th or beginning of 5th century) inasmuch as it disapproved the works of Gentiles as well. The antecedent approval of certain works especially of the Fathers whose

8. The popes have not only enacted legislation concerning censorship but also issued official communications condemning books and writings which they judged to be dangerous for the faithful (cf. J. Hilgers, *Die Bucherverbote in Papstbriefen*, Herder, 1907)

9. cf. G.B. Flahiff, "Ecclesiastical Censorship of Books in the Twelfth Century" *Mediaeval Studies* IV, 1942, p. 8; cf. also Wiest, *op. cit.*, p. 11

10. cf. Flahiff, *art. cit.* p. 8

11' cf. PL 204, 641

orthodoxy was known and the disapproval of the works of the alleged heretics are found also in the Decree of Gelasius (5th cent.) and in the writings of St. Jerome¹².

5. In the New Testament

In the teaching of the Apostles themselves as recorded in the New Testament we find warnings and admonitions to avoid false teachers (cf. Tit. 3:10), to "have nothing to do with godless and silly myths" (1 Tim. 4:7), and to avoid godless chatter "which will lead people more and more into ungodliness" (2 Tim. 2:16). And we find an initial form of censorship in the incident at Ephesus where "a number of those who practised magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all" (Acts 19:19) with the result that the "word of the Lord grew and prevailed mightily"¹³.

II. Vatican II and the new Code of canon law

Today, the phenomenon of the press has evolved considerably and the physiognomy of world-culture has changed remarkably. When printing was invented, it was practically impossible for the Church authorities to exercise control over the spread of the written word. It is not within the powers of the Church to control the press effectively. To meet this situation the Church began to enact general laws imposing the obligation of pre-censorship, with measures of sanctions like excommunication. In the Constitution of Innocent VIII "Among the many" which was the first document expressing concern over the press, the obligation of pre-censorship imposed was total, without making any distinction whether a book or writing dealt with matters pertaining to faith and morals or not, and whether the author was a Christian or not¹⁴. The fact that the popes continued to legislate

12. cf. Wiest, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-7

13. cf. Acts 19:20.

14. It is interesting to note that the original desire of the Church was to exercise a total control over the Press.

for the universal Church as well as for particular regions shows that her legislations did not meet with appreciable success. Now, unable to control the printed material everywhere, the Council of Trent published the first "Index" of forbidden books, thus to protect at least the faithful from danger. Later the Church established the Congregation of Index itself in order to draw up from time to time lists of books forbidden to the faithful under pain of ecclesiastical sanctions. This measure also proved to be ineffective. But in Vatican II the sentiment to abolish the Index gained ground and in 1966 cardinal Ottaviani, the then pro-prefect of the "Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith" declared that there would be no more editions of the Index and that the Index would not have from then on any other value than that of a historical document. Further, the Council declared that Man has the right to religious freedom, that in religious matters no one should be forced to act against his conscience, nor hindered to act according to his conscience¹⁵. This right implies also the responsibility to search for truth, above all, that truth which concerns religion, and to hold to the truth which is obtained, and to order one's whole life according to this truth. The Council rightly points out that it is impossible to fulfil this obligation unless one has the inner psychological freedom as well as freedom from external coercion¹⁶.

15. "The Vatican Council declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom. Freedom of this kind means that all men should be immune from coercion on the part of individuals, social groups and every human power so that, within due limits, nobody is forced to act against his convictions in religious matters in private or in public, alone or in association with others." (*Dignitatis Humanae*, Declaration on Religious Liberty, 2) Transl. : A. Flannery, Vatican Council II, 1975.

16. "It is in accordance with their dignity that all men, because they are persons, that is, beings endowed with reason and free will and therefore bearing personal responsibility, are both impelled by their nature and bound by a moral obligation to seek the truth, especially religious truth. They are also bound to adhere to the truth once they come to know it and direct their whole lives in accordance with the demands of truth. But men cannot satisfy this obligation in a way that is in keeping with their own nature if they enjoy psychological freedom and immunity from external coercion." (*Ibid.*)

Here a reversal of the traditional approach is evident; traditionally one proceeded always from values (like the truth of Catholic dogmas, the continuity of traditions, the precepts of the natural law interpreted by the magisterium of the Church), which constitute the common good of the Church and not from the rights of the person¹⁷.

On the basis of this declaration which upholds man's responsibility, nay his moral obligation, to search for truth and demands both internal and external freedom for it, the Church should have also suppressed the law concerning the censorship of books, just as it reformed the holy office and abolished the Index. Yet we find in the new Code of Canon Law, promulgated in 1983, eleven canons dealing "with the media of social communication and especially with books" (canons 822-832)¹⁸. The new Code too affirms the right and duty of the Church to be watchful that harmful literature and communications do not bring detriment to the faithful, and to demand that writings touching faith and morals be submitted to its judgment, and to proscribe writings which are harmful to faith and morals (canon 823 1). In comparison with the old Code of canon law, there is a certain softening of the tone in the new, but the old claims do still persist. The old canon is formulated in such a way as to oblige the authors to submit their writings for pre-censorship, whereas in the new what is clearly stated is the Church's right and duty to demand writings touching faith and morals for censorship. However, with regard to the Holy Scripture, pre-censorship is still a matter of obligation (can. 825 1). The same holds good for liturgical texts (can. 826) and for catechetical books meant for instruction in educational institutions (can. 827). For all this the Code legislates also for the constitution of board of censors (can. 830).

17. cf. Sigmond, art. cit., p.150

18. *De Instrumentis Communicationis socialis et in specie de Libris* (Codex Iuris Canonici, Libreria editrice, Vaticana, 1983), p. 149. In the old Code this section was titled: *De Praevia censura librorum orumque prohibitionem*.

III. Theological reflections

When we look at the history of censorship in the Church we discover a certain evolution. In the apostolic times when the Church had no political power, the faithful were warned to avoid false teachings. As the Church began to have the benefit of political power, it also began to take repressive measures against those who did not fall in line with the mind of those who had power. The authority of the Church continued to fight against doctrinal differences and against those who even aroused any suspicion of it. In this struggle one cannot exclude also such human factors as hatred and envy. When an abstract subject like Trinity is dealt with, it is not difficult to find something or other of which to accuse the author. Fearing repressive measures, writers began to seek antecedent approval which developed into a custom of a kind of voluntary pre-censorship.

With Vatican II admitting freedom of expression and of access to what is expressed, a climate of pluralism in theology set in and theologians began to take seriously the freedom of research and of expression. But this was too much of a wishful hope. The official Church began to resort to the old repressive methods to extinguish that freedom. Thus many post-conciliar theologians began to be suspected by the official Church, some of them censured without proper clarification of the matter and others even without their knowledge, and it became again impossible for theologians to do their work honestly. In the new Code of canon law, censorship is not suppressed but reaffirmed with some modification of tone. Concerning repressive censorship the old canon uses the term "prohibere" (to prohibit) whereas in the new it is "reprobare" which means "to reject, to condemn". What makes the difference between "prohibere" and "reprobare" in this context is evidently political power. The Church has no power today to prohibit anything effectively. One is reminded here of the well-known remark of Nietzsche on

Christianity: 'It is not their love of Man, but the powerlessness of it that hinders the Christians to burn us.'¹⁹

Why is it that the authority in the Church cannot give up the idea that truth has to be protected by force? Was it necessary for the converts at Ephesus to burn their books for the Word of God to grow and prevail in might? Could not those books have been preserved as historical documents for posterity? One asks further, whether fear did not play a role in the whole episode of conversion and the consequent burning of books on "magic arts"; "...and fear fell upon them all" (Acts 19:17). Again, why is it that the history of the Church is darkened by the burning of heretics, and the language of the Church soiled with the utterance of condemnations?

The basic reason is power-politics; the basic reason lies in the self-understanding of the Church as a perfect society with the supernatural mission to lead men and women to salvation as authorized by a revealing God who entrusted the deposit of faith to Church leaders to guard faithfully and to administer zealously even with force²⁰. The Church did not think it improper even to force people to enter into the kingdom. The *coge intrare* (compel them to enter) of St. Augustine is perfectly in line with this ecclesiology.

The intolerance of the Church culminating in the Inquisition of the Middle Ages is thus not just an aberration from the basic principles of the Church, but their consequence. 'Out of mercy for the souls the Church must be

19. "Nicht ihre Menschenliebe, sondern die Chnmacht ihrer Menschenliebe hindert die Christen von heute, uns zu verbrennen" (cited here from E. Klinger and K. Wittstadt (ed.), *Glaube im Prozess*. Herder, 1984, p. 745).

20. Censorship is always a political act, whether exercised by a government or by an ecclesiastical authority; due to this political character it is found in one way or another in every society, in order to protect the cultural and ideological structure of every established society:

an establishment of coercion', remarks Adolf Harnack²¹. Censorship is, in fact, an aspect of this coercion. J. C. Calhoun is not exaggerating when he defines censorship in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* as "the control of literature that is exercised by the Church for the salvation of souls"²².

However, the understanding of the Church as a perfect society with all the rights and duties belonging to such a society has been left behind by Vat. II. Together with it disappeared also the "anathemas" and many of the excommunications. The image of the Church which emerged in Vat. II is that of the people of God, a pilgrim people on the move. From the point of view of Church's relationship with the world, it is defined as a sacrament. The function of the sacrament is to be an effective sign; this is an efficacy which does not imply any compulsion or constraint. In fact, it is one conceptual means among others to overcome ecclesiological triumphalism, clericalism and juridicism²³. Vat. II also recognized the right of the human person to search for truth which implies the risk that one may not find it exactly as it is proposed by the official Church²⁴.

The recognition of the right of conscience, the declaration on human dignity and freedom, and above all the new ecclesiology made the institution of censorship meaningless and its continuation unjustified. How is it possible

21. "Aus Barmherzigkeit gegen die Seelen muss sie eine Zwangsanstalt sein" (cited here from E. Klinger and K. Wittstadt (ed.) *op. cit.*, p. 745.

22. Vol. III (1967), p. 392 b.

23. Cf. W. Kasper, "Die Kirche als universales Sakrament des Heils" in E. Klinger and K. Wittstadt (ed.), *Glaube im Prozess*, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

24. The right to ask questions and to search for truth is so fundamental that when it is exercised it becomes a *Grundgeschehnis*, a foundational event (Heidegger, *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Tübingen 1976, p. 109), and the source par excellence of the power of our being: "Das Fragen ist die echte und rechte und einzige Weise der Würdigung dessen, was aus höchstem Rang unser Dasein in die Macht halt" (*Ibid.*, p. 63).

to reconcile the proclamation that one should enjoy both inner psychological freedom as well as freedom from external coercion to be able to search for truth with the new canons on the Church's right and duty to exercise censorship? Or, is it that this declaration on freedom apply only to non-Christians that they may freely come to the Church, and to civil authorities that they let citizens embrace the Christian faith and practise it? In fact, the declaration on religious freedom concludes with the exhortation that this right of the human person must be recognised in the Constitution of the State so that it becomes a civil right²⁵.

If the emphasis is truly on human dignity and freedom, just as non-Christians should have the freedom to come to the Church, so Christians should have the freedom to leave the Church if they were to reach that conclusion after honest enquiry²⁶. If, then, Christians too are equally entitled to religious freedom which is based on human dignity, it is a violation of that dignity and its rights, when the Church assumes a protective attitude and prevents through censorship a writing or a communication to reach them²⁷.

One would have thought that the suppression of the Index was inspired by the awareness of the inviolable dignity of the human person. The movement in the Council against the Index was certainly so inspired, but not the moves on the part of the magisterium of the Church. That is why in the new Code of canon law the right to draw up the Index is still retained. Thus D. Dee is

25. "This right of the human person to religious freedom must be given such recognition in the constitutional order of society as will make it a civil right" (Declaration on Relg. Liberty, 2).

26. The 'radicalism' of the declaration on religious freedom consists in this that it is valid also for Christians.

27. The protectionism of the Church is, in fact, a disservice also to mature living faith. Heidegger writes: But on the other hand, any faith which does not expose itself permanently to the possibility of unfaith or unbelief is no faith at all; it is rather a comfortable attitude...., (*op cit.*, p. 5).

certainly expressing the mind of the Magisterium when he argues that the suppression of Index does not mean "that whatever has been contained on the Index is now automatically permitted reading for all Catholics"²⁸. How is it that Church authority is unable to see that censorship is external coercion in another form, and that it violates Man's dignity and his right to freedom? One is first a human person and then a Christian - not the other way round.

Not only with regard to censorship but also in general there is the complaint that the new Code has neutralised Vat. II, and that it has introduced a development which is dangerous and harmful to the Ecumenical Council²⁹. It is true that the new Code is unthinkable in this form without Vat. II. But it is far from the claim of Pope John Paul II, who called the new Code the final document of the Council which translates the Ecclesiology of Vat. II into juridical language³⁰. What we find in the Code is a "split-ecclesiology". The ecclesiology of Vat. II was communion-oriented which is reflected only weakly in the New Code; the Code's main thrust is still the "hierarchologico-primatial" ecclesiology³¹. Y. Congar too joins this criticism and in addition expresses the regret that the new Code has not been preceded by a fundamental and even radical reflection on the nature of the law that guides the life of Christians³².

This however does not mean that the Church should not be vigilant to correct whatever is wrong and unhealthy, it has to be done in a more dignified way respecting the

28. *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, III (1967), p. 435

29. cf. *Concilium* 8/9, 1983 (German edition), pp. 585-586; cf. also Ulrich Ruh, "Rahmenrecht oder Einheitsgesetz", *Herder Korrespondenz*, 38, 3 (1984), p. 138.

30. cf. *Ibid.*

31. cf. *Ibid.*

32. "On peut regretter qu'il nait pas été précédé par une réflexion fondamentale, et même radicale, sur la nature du droit qui régle la vie du peuple chrétien" (Y. Congar, "Les Conciles dans le nouveau Code", *La Croix*, Oct. 10, 1983).

basic freedom of expression as well as the freedom to have access to free expressions. In the place of the organ of censorship, then, what the Church needs today is the readiness to dialogue. The Church has to be certainly vigilant that unorthodox literature should not go uncontested. The rest should be left to the responsibility of the persons concerned. There is no other way. If the faithful are able to understand an unorthodox view and be influenced by it, they should all the more be able to understand and be convinced of the orthodox one.

All this is in theory. In concrete practice the Church authority has not changed much. A recent Statement of the Indian Theological Association³³ points out the ambiguity and duplicity in the life of the Church: "It proclaims freedom for all; yet it imposes arbitrary control at all levels of ministry and decision-making..., for example, persons are ostracised even for apparently innovative ideas; those in authority often pass judgment on them without proper dialogue with those concerned and without consulting other experts³⁴. Mentioning a few cases of ecclesiastical sanctions in the Indian Church recently, the Indian Theological Association insists "that the procedure followed when dealing with such cases must take into account the individual's personal dignity and his inalienable rights and must be subject to the due process of justice", and that "people generally have a right to be informed about decisions taken in such public causes which have a bearing on their life"³⁵.

33. For the full text of the Statement, see Jeevadhara, Jan. 1984 pp. 65-73.

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 771-72

35. *Ibid.*, p. 65. One of the cases of the sanctions mentioned in the statement is that of mine and I am grateful to the Indian Theological Association for that. I take here the freedom to testify that the words quoted are true in my case. I sit back now and muse over the situation of affairs in my country which is the home of two great world-religions known for their tolerance: two articles of mine appeared in a monthly and the decision is taken in Rome to relieve me from my position without even informing me or affording me a hearing.

As the signs show, then, the Church authority is not going to give up its dictatorial ways, neither in its legislation nor in its practice. And there are many today who aspire for authoritative positions in the Church and reach there with the will to dominate. In this situation, the only possible course of action is that Christians fearlessly assert their freedom of expression and the freedom to have access to such expression, continuing thus to exert pressure from below on Church authority so that it be brought to the faithful observance of the principles already approved in the Church. "Silence, worse still agreement, when the more courageous course should be honest disagreement, perpetuates injustice and promotes authoritarian practices."³⁶

Abraham Koothottil

36. "Statement of the Indian Theological Association", *Jeevadhara*, January 1984, p. 66-67.